TWO AND TWENTY LECTVRES VPON THE FIVE FIRST CHAPTERS OF IEREMIAH.

WITH PRAYERS ANNEXED, AT the end of euery Lecture:

By Master IOHN CALVIN.

WHICH BEING FAITHFVLLY COLlected from him as hee vttered them in Latine, in the Schooles of Geneua, were afterwards *translated into French:*

And now newly turned out of French, into English, *with a Table at the end, containing the summe and scope of euery Lecture.*

MATTH. 24. 15.
Let him that readeth, consider it.

AT LONDON,
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TWENTY

LECTURES UPON

TO THE NOBLE AND VERTVOVS LADY, THE LADY LVCIE, COVNTESSE of Bedford: And to the Right Honourable and highly honoured Lady, the Lady *Anne Harrington*, Barrones: mercy *and peace be multiplied.*

RIght Honourable: The holy Prophet *Ieremiah* (according to the diuers subiects he had to worke vpon in his ministeriall function) is forced sometimes with *Isaiah*, his fore-runner, to lift vp his voice like vnto a *Sonne of Thunder*; and eftsoones, with the same Prophet againe, to alter and change the same, into the still, and soft voice of a *Sonne of Consolation*: wherein, as Gods faithfull messenger, hee carries himselfe faithfully. For as a *Sonne of Thunder*, he sharply inueyes against the sinnes, and sinners of his time; boldly denouncing Gods iudgements against them: and as a *Sonne of consolation*, (for their sakes whom the Lord had appointed to bee heires of saluation) hee sweetly preacheth Christ: mixing

Isa. 58. 1.

1. *King.* 19. 12.

often with the terrible threats of the Law, the saluing promises of the Gospell. That if any came by the ministery of the one, to be pricked in conscience, and humbled: he readily, like the good Samaritan, powreth in the mollifying and healing oyle of the other, to cure and reuiue them. And thus as a wise disposer, and dispenser of the manifold secrets of God, his song (in a maner) throughout his Propheſie (like *Aarons* Bels) soundeth forth iudgement and mercy: preaching iudgement to such as were, & would be sinners in Sion, and mercy to such as he saw to to be mourners in Sio. In which respects he may serue as a liuely patterne for all Preachers to follow, in their ordinary course of preaching. These Sermons of his (many of them) doe notably sute to our times; and therefore ought to be read, and read againe, of all estates, high and low.

Act. 2. 37.

Psalm. 101. 1.

Exod. 28. 33.

Isa. 33. 14.

Isa. 61. 3.

But for as much as in reading the Prophets, sundry difficulties are met withall, which euery one hath not the skill of himselfe to dissolue; it would (as I thinke) be very beneficiall for such, if they had an holy helper, such an one as this, ready at hand: *An interpreter: One* (indeed) *of a thousand*; that might helpe to dissolue their doubts, and vnloose their hard knots for them: That so vnderstanding what they read, they might (by the blessing of God) with the more ease come to profit by their reading. This hath our *Philip* faithfully performed (according to that light of vnderstanding wherewith the Lord had extraordinarily endowed him) throughout the Prophets: and pity

Iob 33. 23.

Act. 8. 34. 35

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it is, that so great light should after a sort lie buried in darknesse, from many well minded Christians; onely because they are not (as they might be) turned into our owne natiue language.

Not many yeeres since, a Lampe (if I may so speake) began to be kindled, for giuing them some insight into the harder passages of the Prophets; by translating this Authors Commentaries vpon the Propheſie of *Isaiah* into English: but much more cleere would the light haue now shined, if thereunto had been added the translation of all his Lectures vpon the Propheſie of *Ieremiah* also. For mine owne part, seeing sufficiency of oyle hath failed me, to furnish out this second Lampe vnto the end; I haue for the present proceeded onely through the fiue first Chapters.

The which (Right Honourable) as a testimony of that seruice and duty I owe your Honours; I haue presumed (as one ouertaken with *Ahimaaz* his hast, somwhat abruptly I confesse) so dedicate vnto you. And if in token of your fauourable acceptance thereof, you shall be pleased to suffer the same to passe, vnder your Honourable names, and patronage; many may be occasioned thereby to blesse God for you: and my selfe still to pray, that the blessing of him who was ready to perish, may come vpon you.

Your Honours humbly
at commandment,

CLEMENT
COTTON.

it is, that so great light should alter a Text lie buried in darkenesse, from many well minded Christians, onely because they are not (as they might be) trained into our owne native language.

Not many yeeres since, a Lampe (which by speciall) began to be kindled, for giuing some inlight into the darker passages of the Prophets; by translating this Authors Commentaries vpon the Prophecie of Daniel into English: but much more clearer would this light haue now shined, if time had not been added the translation of all his Lectures vpon the Prophecie of Jeremiah. For mine owne part, hauing sufficiency of ayde vnto the end; I haue for the present proceeded onely through the first fiue Chapters.

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Your Honours humbly

at command.

CLEMENT

COTTON.

TO THE READER.

GOod Christian Reader, if (as Salomon saith) thou wouldest bee truly wise for thy selfe, or hast a purpose to shew mercy to thine owne soule, in any thing, then manifest it in this one thing (absolutely needfull for thee, if hitherto thou have neglected it) viz. Be sure, before thou leave this thy naturall life; that God (by the ministery of his holy word) hath breathed into thy dead soule, a supernaturall and spirituall life. For in the grave whither thou goest, there will be neither time, nor place for thee, to have this worke of workes effected, Ioh. 12. 35. Thy life is in length but like a span; and every step thou steppest, for ought thou knowest, there is but a step betweene thee and death. Seeing therefore by Gods especiall appointment, thou art once to step out of this world (how soone thou knowest not) it being also thy last step: it standeth thee upon, whilest life and liberty lasteth, wisely to foresee, that then thou steppest surely, 2. Pet. 1. 10. For if thou diest, and after descendest into the grave, a naturall man; so thou risest at the last day, and then woefull will thy condition be: for thou shalt never see the face of God to thy comfort. His wrath is now revealed from heaven, against all ungodlinesse, and unrighteousnesse of men: Alas! How much more then? Psa. 77. 7

Prou. 9. 12.
Prou. 11. 17.
Luk. 10. 42.
Ioh. 5. 25.
Eccles. 9. 10.
Psal. 39. 5.
1. Sam. 20. 3.
Heb. 9. 27.
Gen. 27. 2.
Prou. 22. 3.
Prou. 11.
Heb. 12. 14.
Rom. 1. 18.

needfull

2. Cor. 6. 2.

Lam. 3. 41.

Luk. 9. 44.
Isa. 55. 10. 11.
Ioel 1. 23.
[a] Psal. 19. 8.
[b] Iam. 1. 21.
[c] Mat. 13. 33.
[d] Ioh. 17. 17.
[e] Rom. 6. 17.
[f] 2. Cor. 3. 18.

Tit. 2. 13.
1. Cor. 2. 8.

Act. 14. 3. and 20. 32.

Rom. 10. 8.

Iam. 1. 21.

[g] 2. Tim. 3. 16.
[h] 2. Pet. 1. 21.
[i] Hos. 8. 12.
[k] Rom. 15. 4.
[l] Hos. 8. 12.

Iam. 1. 21.

Rom. 5. 7.

Ioh. 7. 10.

Needfull therefore it is for thee now; euen now whileſt the day of ſaluation laſteth, to lift vp thy heart with thine hands, with loud and ſtrong cryes, vnto God in the heauens, that for the paſſion and death of Chriſt, he will be pleaſed to grant thee grace, that his word may now ſo ſinke into thine eares, that thence it may ſoake as the raine of righteouſneſſe, into the furrowes of thine heart; to [a] illuminate, to [b] regenerate, to [c] ſeaſon, and [d] ſanctifie, thy whole man, ſoule and body, 1. Theſſ. 5. 23. that thereby (as by the Spirit of the Lord) thou being caſt as into a [e] new mold, and [f] transformed into the ſame image, from glory to glory; thou mayeſt with patience, comfort, and good conſcience, wait till the laſt day; for the appearance of the Lord of glory, thy Lord and thy God, the man Chriſt Ieſus. For it is not ſufficient for thee onely to know the word, to bee the word of Gods grace; vnleſſe by ſound euidences, thou alſo diſcerneſt, that it hath been a word of grace vnto thee: nor barely affirme it to be the word of faith: but by good proofe to find, that it hath been the meanes to breed a ſauing faith in thee. Nor yet onely to ſay, that it is able to ſaue ſoules: but that it hath been Gods powerfull inſtrument to ſaue thee. For the truth is, the word of God was not [g] inſpired from God, nor written by [h] holy men of God, to [i] vs, and [k] for vs, to the end it ſhould ſtand [l] ſtranger-like, aloofe off from vs; but rather by admitting it to dwell and inhabite richly, and plenteouſly in vs, Coloſ. 3. 16. it might at length impart of that heauenly vertue that is in it, vnto vs. We commonly eſteeme men ſo farre foorth good, as they haue extended of their good things vnto vs: and thoſe things good, that haue communicated of their goodneſſe

nesse vnto vs. Now if there be any thing vnder heauen good, which also is able to make vs good, it is the good word of God. But we shall but coldly, and faintly commend it for good; vnlesse we know by good experience, that it hath communicated of its goodnesse vnto vs; what good (I pray you) doth that meat or drinke doe vs, which we receiue not into vs? But where the stomache craueth, and receiueth these; the effects will soone be discerned. I tasted a little honey (saith Ionathan) and mine eyes haue been enlightened. Sampson drinking (in his excessiue thirst) of the water of Lehi; his spirit reuiued. The like befell the poore affamished Egyptian. Oh that we could come to the good word of God, but with the one halfe of that hungry and thirsty appetite, wherewith (for the most part) wee come to these good creatures of God: we come to these indeed; we take these; we receiue these; and the goodnesse that is in these, we make it our owne. And if through any defect in nature, we feele them any way defectiue in their nature and properties to vs; we are ready by and by to say, all is not as it should be with vs. Doe wee so strongly and mainly presse toward these, whose vertue at the best, being perishable, can but sustaine a perishable life: and can we not be at quiet with our selues, vnlesse we feele in our selues, that our natures are therby cheered and refreshed? And shall we not much more presse forwards, to take, and receiue into vs, as with violence, the good word of God, which is fitted and framed by God himselfe, to sustaine vs spiritually? Let vs draw neere vnto it then, with knowledge, desire, and faith, as the poore woman in the Gospell, drew nigh to Christ. So shall we sensibly feele the saving and sanctifying

Isa. 39. 8.
Rom. 6. 17.
Heb. 6. 5.
1. Sam. 14. 27. 29.
Iudg. 15. 19.
1. Sam. 30. 11. 12.
Psal. 104. 15.
Ioh. 6. 27.
1. Cor. 6. 13.
Luk. 5. 1. and 12. 1.
Matth. 11. 12.
1. Pet. 2. 2.
Heb 4. 2.
2. Tim. 3. 15. 16.

vertue thereof to be infused into vs to our euerlasting consolation and comfort. And then shall our hearts and mouthes be enlarged to speake all the good, of this good word of God, that can be deuised. Yea, we shall not only praise it, but also with Dauid, the man of God, wee shall highly prize it; farre aboue all earthly profits, or delights, Psal. 119.72.103. Then we shall be able with him againe and againe, to professe how entirely we loue it, vers. 97. yea, how greatly we delight in it, vers. 174. yea, what ioy and felicity we take in it, vers. 14. 162. yea, how incessantly our thoughts and meditations are taken vp about it: namely, before break of day, ver. 147 throughout the day, vers. 97 in the night vers. 55. yea, at midnight, vers. 62. Let vs not then (as the manner of some is) permit the word of God, barely to harbour in our houses: but let vs endeauour rather, to harbour it within the closet of our hearts. And oh happy wee! that euer it was our hap, to lodge within vs so honourable and gracious a guest; that will euery way be so beneficiall vnto vs; as in our greatest distractions, to councell vs; in our deepest distresses, to comfort vs: and when we are to seeke of our way; to direct vs, directly to that hauen of happinesse, where there shall bee mirth without mourning; fellowship with God, and all his saints; without parting; where we shall be euer prest to doe his will without fainting; and that, time without ending. As for those that [a] neglecte so great saluation, that haue the word, [b] but loue it not: that reade it, but will not be [c] reformed by it: that [d] despise it, [e] reiect, and scorne it: To say no more, their damnation sleepeth not: God cannot, nor wil not put vp, such indignities at the hands of sinners, Isa. 5.24. Ier. 5.13.14. and 6.10.11

Psal. 138.2.
Psal. 19.7.8.9.10.

Psal. 119.11.
Luk. 11.28.

Psal 119.24.
Vers. 50.

105.

[a] Heb. 2.3.
[b] 2. Thes. 2.10.
[c] Psa. 50.16.17
[d] Prou. 13.13.
[e] Ier. 6.10.

vnlesse

vnlesse they meet him, and that speedily, by true and vnfained repentance. And if thou say, Oh that I could! I wish thee often to read these holy Sermons of repentance, penned by the holy Prophet Ieremiah, for that purpose. For if repentance be a wounding of the heart, proceeding of faith, which seeketh vnto God for mercy: then hath Ieremiah, like a skilfull master-builder in these present Chapters, and those that follow, laid the ground-worke of such a repentance out for thee. And if thou say, how shal I vnderstand, vnlesse I haue a guide? Accept (I pray thee, for the present) of this, which God of his goodnesse hath heere sent vnto thee, by giuing him accesse into thy Chariot, closet, or other retired places: and if thou entreat him friendly, and makest thy gaine by him of this little; the Lord peraduenture may hereafter trust thee with more.

Amos 4.12.

Act. 8.31.

But before I take my leaue of thee, as the summe of all: let me entreat thee (as thou tenderest thine owne welfare) to lay vp in thy heart, these sixe lessons, which the word of God teacheth thee, according as I find them laid downe by a learned Diuine.

1 The word of God teacheth thee, that thou being by creation made righteous, art by the fall of Adam, and by thine owne transgression, become sinfull, Eccles. 7,31. Gen. 6.5.

2 The word of God teacheth thee, that thou art by nature the child of Gods wrath, and a fire-brand of hell, Ephes. 2.3.

3 The word of God teacheth thee, that thou haste cause to bee troubled for this, more than for all worldly crosses, and to be humbled and cast downe in thy selfe before God for it, Act. 16.30.

4 *The word of God teacheth thee, that thou being laden with thy sinnes, and weary of them, art not to sinke downe in despaire of Gods goodnesse; but to relie vpon his mercy in Christ Iesus, Ezra.* 10. 2.

5 *The word of God teacheth thee, that thus relying vpon God in Christ, he hath mercy in store for thee, Psalm.* 130. 7. *Ioh.* 3. 16.

6 *The word of God teacheth thee, that all true beleeuers haue a constant care and endeauour, both to learne and know the will of God, and to obey it in all things, Luk.* 1. 74. 75. *Tit.* 2. 11. 12.

Ioh. 10. 27.

These poynts the word of God teacheth: and these if we learne and beleeue, as the word teacheth them; wee shall in the end be saued. And thus with my humble prayers to God that it may be so,

I bid thee in Christ heartily farwell.

C. C.

LECTVRES VPON THE FIVE FIRST CHAPTERS OF THE PROphecie of *Ieremiah*.

By M. IOHN CALVIN.

LECTVRE I.

The Prayer which Master *Calvin* was alwaies wont to make at the beginning of his Lectures.

THe Lord enable vs so to handle the secrets of his heauenly wisedome, that we may truly profit in the feare of his holy name, to his glory and our edification. So be it.

HAuing expounded the twelue lesser Prophets, and at length finished the exposition of *Daniels* reuelations: I haue now begun, and purpose (the Lord granting me life and leisure) to vnfold vnto you the booke of *Ieremiahs* Prophecie also: which if I attaine vnto, there will then remaine no more of all the Prophets, but onely *Ezechiel*; for the exposition whereof I wish there may be some other (and I hope my wish shall preuaile) better fitted for that purpose than my selfe.

What time Ieremiah began to prophesie.

As touching *Ieremiah*; note in the first place, that hee began to execute his prophetical office whileft *Iosias* the King raigned; namely, in the thirteenth yeere of his raigne. For albeit that King was a sincere worshipper of God, yet were things euen then much out of frame, and confused: for the booke of the Law was lost; by means whereof it was easie for euery one, at his pleasure, to broach many wicked errours, quite contrary to true religion. Neither are we to doubt, but in so great a liberty, many (who desired nothing more than to bring in confusions) stroue eagerly to peruert and ouerthrow the worship of God, and the purity of doctrine: euery one forging to himselfe many dotages and impieties. For let it be granted that the Priests meant faithfully to teach the people of God; yet did not their knowledge depend wholly vpon the Law. Now howsoeuer it be very likely, that the memory thereof was not vtterly abolished; yet questionlesse there only remained but some few reliques of it, so as they could not cleerly gather thence what kind of gouernment it was which God had ordained to be in his Church. For it is recorded in the holy History, that the booke of the Law was found in the eighteenth yeere of *Iosias* his raigne. Thus *Ieremiah* had begun euen now to prophesie, foure, nay fiue yeeres fully compleat. This example then sufficiently manifests what slothfulnesse and carelesnesse there is in men, in endeauouring to aduance the true worship of God. For hee had giuen an expresse charge by *Moses*, that a copy of the Law should not onely be holily and carefully kept in the Temple; but that the King himselfe also should haue a copy of it by him, Deut. 17.18. Besides, a commandement was added, that in all their solemne feasts, the whole Law should be repeated in the eares of all the people, Deut. 31.12. But after the Kings began once to reuolt from Gods true worship: the copy of the Law was no more esteemed among them: and at length, euen the Law also it selfe was vtterly lost. No doubt but this happened

2. Chro. 34.15.

through the tyranny of King *Manasses*, who exercised his cruelties no lesse vpon the Priests, than vpon the rest of Gods seruants. For no sooner brake any small sparkle of light forth, but he made such a slaughter, that he caused blood to runne through all the streets of Ierusalem, as the sacred history testifies, 2. King. 21. 16. What maruell is it then, if he tooke and conueyed euen out of the Temple it selfe, all the written copies of the Law which were extant, that so he might vtterly extinguish all light of heauenly doctrine? Notwithstanding the booke which had bin hidden, was found againe by *Hilkiah* the Priest, as it is also recited in the chapter formerly alleged. This is it wee haue to note then in the first place, from the circumstance of time, wherein *Ieremiah* began to propheſie. For religion being thus corrupted, and euery one taking vpon him to forge what errours foeuer him lifted: the charge imposed vpon the Prophet, must of necessity be very irksome to him, or burthensome for him to beare.

2. Chro. 34. 15.

In the next place, we are also to note the end. He saith, that from this time he continued in executing his prophetical office vntill the captiuity of Babylon: hee held on his course then for the space of 40. yeeres. Now in the progresse of his booke we shall better perceiue, what and how sharpe the conflicts were, which he was faine to vndergoe. But put the case the people had been much more teachable than they were, yet could not hee execute his charge enioyned him by God, without extreame griefe, and also like tediousnesse. For we shall see anon, what the summe of his message was with which he was sent. Seeing then he continued these his painfull labours, fortie yeeres together: thence it is easie to iudge with what an heroicall spirit hee was endowed. Moreouer, if wee seriously consider, what, and how many tempests were daily raised vp against him, vtterly to dis-hearten him, yea wholly to turne him out of the right way: hereby also will his inuincible constancy, and ardent zeale, shine

How long Ieremiah propheſied.

Ieremiahs constancy and courage, noted.

shine yet more cleerely vnto vs, in that he yet ceased not still to goe on in those duties which he was to performe. Therewithall also we are to note, that from the destruction of the City, after which the inhabitants of Ierusalem were carried away captiue into Babylon; that euen then *Ieremiah* desisted not. For he was led into Egypt, as it may easily be gathered out of the end of this booke; and especially from the 44. chapter: yea he was violently led thither, albeit he had (from the mouth of the Lord) cursed all the Iewes who sought lurking holes in Egypt. Now when himselfe was thus constrained to goe downe thither, this might much diminish his authority: for the wicked (as we know) watch at euery turne to espie occasions how they may disgrace and slander the seruants of God. Neither might they seeme to want some goodly pretext in this behalfe: Ho, this fellow hath cursed all such as goe downe into Egypt. But (I pray you) where dwelles hee himselfe now? Euen in Egypt, with the rest that are fled thither. Neither is it to be doubted, but the faith of this holy man was much assailed, by the breaking of these, and the like iests vpon him; for as much as impiety hath euermore gone hand in hand with pride and arrogancy: yet there, *Ieremiah* constantly persisted in his course, yea euen till the city was rased. And it is like enough he continued his labours in teaching, more than fiftie yeeres. It is said by some, that he was stoned to death: and this is very likely; for hee ceased not still to enuay as vehemently against the Iewes, which were fled into Egypt, as he did during the time that the City was in safety. Now they were at that time enraged with an extreame desperatenesse. Thence it came to passe then that they slew the holy Prophet, which (in their conceit) they thought they might lawfully doe, in regard he insulted ouer them (as it were) in their miseries: but he endeauored rather thereby to tame their pride and rebellion, which was indeed now become incorrigible: but as for them they tooke it not so.

Ieremiah carried away into Egypt of the Iewes by force.

Ieremiah stoned to death, as it is thought.

The summe of Ieremiahs prophesie.

I come now to the summe of the prophesie: For *Isaiah* and the rest of the Prophets that liued in those times, had (for the most part) lost their labour, and spent their strength in vaine, what remained vnto *Ieremiah* then, but in few words to pronounce this sentence: *Hereafter expect no more grace nor pardon, for the time of the last vengeance is at hand, in regard you haue too long abused Gods patience, who hitherto hath forborne you, and with all mildnesse and long-suffering hath exhorted you to repentance, and hath testified, that he would deale fauourably and graciously with you, if so be you would conuert & turn into the right way.* Thus then Gods mercy hauing by them been despised, it was requisite *Ieremiah* should thus thunder against such kind of persons, who by their obstinacy (in such a desperate rebellion) were growne incurable. Now yee see whereunto the summe of this doctrine principally tends; namely to shew, that the kingdome and priesthood were at an end, because the Iewes had so long a time together, and after so many waies kindled Gods wrath against them, and had also reiected the holy admonitions of his seruants. *Isaiah* had in like manner threatned them in his time: but to mitigate these feares and terrours, wee see there are alwaies left in his prophesies some hope of pardon: so that as oft as he enuayes in the bitterest manner against them, yet he forthwith addes some word of consolation. Now after the ten tribes were led into captiuity, and that their kingdome was wasted, and yet the Iewes (notwithstanding all this) repented not; nay, they became worse and worse in hardening their hearts against Gods rods and scourges, Was it not needfull (as I haue said before) that he should take them short, and handle them more seuerely? God had contended and pleaded with the Iewes by *Isaiah*, and by other of his Prophets; by *Ieremiah*, and *Ezechiel*, he wholly conuinced them as guilty, and also pronounced sentence of condemnation vpon them. This is the difference which is to bee noted, betweene the forme of doctrine which *Isaiah* held, and

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that which *Ieremiah* kept in his Sermons.

And yet to the end nothing might be wanting to his doctrine, it pleased God that *Ieremiah* also should be an Herald and a publisher of his grace, and of that saluation promised by Iesus Christ. But this exception must neuertheleſſe bee retained; to wit, that hee giues no hope of pardon or mercy, till after they should be chastised and corrected for their offences. Now then we see what *Ieremiah* principaly taught. But the whole, will be better vnderstood by the readers, and more distinctly perceiued by the continuall progresse of the Text. Neither is it my purpose now to shew in generall what is to be sought in the Prophet (for this argument (as I take it) is handled elsewhere) I onely affirme then, that *Ieremiah* was sent of God to preach and publish to the people their last ruine: and then, to declare the redemption to come: yet so, as that still he placeth the captiuity of 70. yeeres betweene. I come now to the words.

*That is, in respect of being freed from their 70. yeeres captiuity.

See his preface before Isaiah.

Verſ. 1. *The words of Ieremiah ſonne of Hilkiah, one of the Priests which were at Anathoth in the land of Beniamin.*

2 *To wit, the word of the Lord came vnto him in the daies of Iosias, the ſonne of Amon, King of Iudah, in the thirteenth yeere of his raigne.*

3 *And was*, that is to say, he continued in his vocation, *in the dayes of Iehoiakim ſonne of Iosias King of Iuda, vntill the end of the captiuity of Ieruſalem, in the fifth moneth.*

I Told you before, how it is not in vaine, that the *time* is here prefixed wherein *Ieremiah* began to execute his propheticall office in the Church of God; namely, because the estate of the people was much corrupted; all religion, blemished, because the booke of the Law was lost. For, thither onely must we goe, to seeke the rule of Gods worship; neither must wee pretend to fetch true vnderstanding from any where else, but from this pure

Gods Law, the rule of Gods worship.

fountaine.

fountaine. Whileſt impiety then had the ſwinge, and that it had already raigned but too long by cuſtome, among the Iewes, *Ieremiah* ſtepe ſuddenly forth: and therefore it was a very heauie burthen which God had impoſed vpon his ſhoulders: for it could not be auoided but many aduerſaries would riſe vp in oppoſition againſt him, whileſt hee endeauored to bring the people backe to the pure doctrine of the Law, which at that time was proudly trampled vnder foot, of the greater part of this people.

Hee calles himſelfe *the ſonne of Hilkiah.* The Iewes thinke this is that *Hilkiah* the Prieſt, which found the booke of *Moſes*, fiue yeeres after: but this is not likely, as I thinke. The coniecture of Saint *Ierome* is altogether friuolous; in regard that from the words which the prophet addes a little after, hee gathers, that hee was but a child when he began to propheſie: as if he gaue not himſelfe this title *by way of ſimilitude.* It is vncertaine in what time of his age hee was called to his propheticall office: yet it is probable that he was then come to mans eſtate, becauſe it was needfull hee ſhould bee furniſhed with more than ordinary authority. Moreouer, had hee been young, or a *child*, vndoubtedly hee would not haue concealed ſo great and excellent a miracle, but would haue ſhewed how he was created a Prophet, before he attained to a ſufficient ripeneſſe of yeeres.

Saint Ierome.

Verſ. 6. 7.

As touching his *father*, it is no maruell if the Iewes transferre this name to the high Prieſt: for wee know how they are alwaies rapt vp (as it were) in their vaine braggings. In as much then as ambition poſſeſſeth their hearts, hence it is they haue affirmed, that *Ieremiah* was the *ſonne* of the high Prieſt, and all (forſooth) that they might adde the more pompe and glory to this eſtate. But what teſtifies the Prophet himſelfe? Truly hee affirmes he was *the ſonne of Hilkiah*; but ye heare him not ſay his father was the high Prieſt. Nay, hee rather addes, *of the Prieſts which were in Anathoth, in the land of Beniamin.*

Of what ſtocke Ieremiah came.

Isa. 10. 30.

iamin. But we know that Anathoth was a little village of small esteeme, not farre off from the City of Ierusalem. Also *Ieremiah* himselfe reports, that it was situate *in the tribe of Beniamin*. We may gather from the words of *Isaiah*, that it was neere to Ierusalem, when he saith, that *poore Anathoth* was afraid, Isa. 10. 30. *Isaiah* there threatens Ierusalem, in regard the enemy was neare; saying, what is your confidence? For from your gates you may heare the cry of the enemie, and the lamentations of your brethren. For Anathoth is not very farre from you, to wit, onely three miles. Seeing then *Ieremiah* saith plainly he was borne in the village of *Anathoth*, why should we imagine hee was the sonne of the hie Priest? And as idle a conceit is that which the Calde paraphrast addes; namely, That the possession of *Helkiah* was in the towne of Anathoth: as if (forsooth) it had been permitted to the Priest to possesse fields. God had onely assigned that which was sufficient to feed their cattell with, Numb. 35. 2. 3. 4. Let vs then follow that which is certaine, and that which is without controuersie, which also may well bee collected from the words of the Prophet, namely, *That he was borne and bred in the poore village of Anathoth*: and yet he affirmes he was of the stocke and *linage of the Priests*. His prophetical office then we see might much better agree to his person, than to other of the Prophets, as to *Amos*, or *Isaiah*. *Isaiah* was pluckt from the Court, because he was of the royall blood, and was ordained a Prophet. The same for diuers respects may bee said of *Amos*. For he was taken from the folds of beasts, being a shepheard, or heard-man, Amos 7. 14. When God deputed such for Prophets in his Church, it is most certaine hee meant thereby to reprooue the Priests with their sloth and carelessnesse. For albeit all the Priests were not Prophets, yet were they thence to bee taken: for the priestly state was (as it were) a seminary of the Prophets. But there being in them a kind of brutishnesse, and as grosse ignorance as might be, God chose Prophets elsewhere, and

The Calde paraphrast.

thus discouered and brought their shame to light. For it was their parts to haue been the messengers of the Lord of hosts: the custodie of the Law ought to haue been in their lips, that at their mouth the people might go to seek the Law, Mal. 2. 7. In regard then that they were dumbe dogs, God caused the honour of the propheticall office to be transferred ouer vnto others. But *Ieremiah* (as I haue already said) who was a Priest, was also therewithall a Prophet.

Of Ieremiahs calling.

In the second verse, he begins to speake of his calling. For it would haue been too bare and naked, if onely at the first entrance hee had affirmed that hee came and brought a message: but in the second verse he more fully shewes hee brought nothing but that which was giuen him in charge *from God*: as if he should say, I haue faithfully deliuered that (as it were from hand to hand) which God hath enioyned me. For wee know that God onely hath all authority in himselfe, when the matter concernes the doctrine of piety and religion; neither in deed appertaines it to mortall men to forge this or that according to their owne appetites, thereby to subiect the faithfull vnder them. Seeing then that God is the onely master and teacher in his Church: whosoeuer seekes or desires to be heard there, he must of necessity approoue himsele to be the minister and seruant of God.

God the onely master & teacher in his Church.

Which *Ieremiah* carefully here doth, when he saith in vers. 4. *That the word of the Lord was giuen him.* Hee saith before, *The words of Ieremiah, the sonne of Hilkiah.* But some one might reply; yea it may be, the meanest of the people: How hast thou intruded thy selfe? Is it fit wee should heare a mortall man? Doth not God reserue this prerogatiue to himselfe alone? *Ieremiah* therefore (as it were by way of correction) addes here, that they are indeed *his words*: not that he is *the author* of them; but *the messenger*, or ambassadour onely. Hee affirmes then that he onely executes that which God had enioyned him. Why so? Because he was first Gods Disciple, before hee

Ieremiah a Disciple, before he was a teacher.

tooke

cooke vpon him the office of teaching. As touching that which appertaines to the *beginning, and end of time*: the cause is briefly noted why he saith, *hee was chosen to be a Prophet in the thirteenth yeere of Iosias, and that he continued this his function to the eleventh yeere of Zedekias.*

How Amon is said to be father to Iosias.

Whereas *Iosias is called the sonne of Amon*, some doubt whether truly and properly *Iosias* was the sonne of *Amon*. For in the yeere 22. *Amon* began to raigne, and raigned onely two yeeres. *Iosias* succeeded in his place when hee was eight yeeres of age. If we precisely count the yeeres, and that *Iosias* was begotten in the sixteenth yeere, then it will seeme absurd that *Amon* should be a father before the sixteenth yeere: for it must needs be, that he was begotten in the fifteenth yeere. Hence we probably gather, that *Amon* was his legall, but not his naturall father: as afterwards, *Zedechias* is called the sonne of *Iosias*, because he was his successor; although he was his nephew by the brothers side, as many thinke. But this is a thing vsuall euery where, that such are called *the children*, or sonnes of Kings, which haue succeeded them; and who were so legally, and not naturally, as I haue said. Now it followes.

Vers. 4. *And the word of the Lord was giuen mee, saying:*

5 *Before I formed thee in the wombe I knew thee; and before thou camest out of the wombe I sanctified thee, and ordained thee to be a Prophet to the nations.*

I *Eremiah* prosecutes that more at large here, which hee touched erewhile; namely, that he was called of God: for otherwise he had rashly thrust in himselfe. We know that none takes this honour to himselfe (as the Apostle saith) but Gods calling onely exalts men to the office of Prophets and teachers. That *Ieremiah* then might procure diligent attention from his auditors, hee boldly auerres, that he had *a calling* to this prophetical function: yea, and that *immediately from Gods owne voice*. To this

Heb. 5. 4.

purpose

purpose it is he saith, that *the word was given him*. And, *that before God formed him in the wombe, he knew him*. Hee brings in God speaking then, that the word might haue the greater emphasis; that is, that it might haue the greater waight and vehemency. For had he made a bare narration in his *owne person*, and told how he was ordained a Prophet by the voice of God; this would not so much haue affected the mindes of his hearers. But when hee brings in *God speaking*; necessity requires, that there should be greater waight and force in this manner of speech. I now omit the full handling of this poynt, namely, that a calling is requisite to a Minister, that he may be heard of Gods people: for, none ought to attribute to himselfe authority to speake in the congregation; as if either it appertained to him by inheritance, or as hauing ability of himselfe, as I haue said; because God reserues this as peculiar to himselfe alone. But I haue elsewhere entreated at large of the calling of the Prophets; and therefore it sufficeth for the present that I haue poynted to the matter, or rather, to the summe of these things as with the finger. Besides, these things may be found in other tracts, or common places. For if I should stand to discusse euery poynt to the full in euery chapter, we should neuer make an end. I haue therefore determined (according to my ordinary custome) to runne ouer this Prophet briefly.

The cause of Master Caluins brenity in his Commentaries and lectures.

Ieremiah declares then, *that he was called of God*, to the end the people might yeeld him that attention which was meet. Now concerning the words, God testifies, *that hee knew Ieremiah before he formed him in the wombe*. This is not spoken so particularly of this Prophet, as if other men were therefore *vnknowne* to God: but this is to be restrained to his office and charge imposed vpon him; as if he should say, *Before I formed thee in the wombe, I ordained thee for this purpose*; namely, *that the office of teaching my people should be committed to thee*.

In the second part of the verse there is a repetition, when

when hee saith, *before thou camest forth of thy mothers wombe, I sanctified thee.* This *sanctification* then, and *knowledge* of God are all one. Thus we see that by *knowledge* in this place, is not onely meant foreknowledge, but predestination, by which God chuseth men according to his good pleasure, and thereunto all also ordaineth, and afterwards sanctifieth them. For no man naturally is sufficient for these things: as *Paul* cries out, in 2. Cor. 2. 16. Seeing then this faculty depends vpon Gods free gift, what maruell is it if God affirmes, *that hee sanctified Ieremiah.* As if he should say, *I not onely formed thee a man in the wombe of thy mother, but therewithall I set thee apart to a speciall vse: and because thou couldest not come furnished thence with such an excellency, as to bee able to exercise the office of a Prophet; therefore I also formed thee a Prophet; and not a man simply and onely.* This is the summe.

Luk. 1. 15.

Now those reason too subtilly, who thinke that the Prophet was indeed sanctified from the wombe of his mother, as *Iohn* the *Baptist* was; for the words sound nothing alike: onely *Ieremiah* testifies that of himselfe, which *Paul* affirmes of himselfe in the first of the Galatians; to wit, *that God knew him before he was borne.* *Ieremiah* then was not in deed *sanctified in the wombe*, but *in Gods predestination, and in his secret counsell*: yea before such time as God then chose him to bee his Prophet. But some may aske here: Was not *Ieremiah* elect before the foundations of the world? The answere is easie. Hee was (no doubt) knowne of God, before the creation of the world: but the Scripture stoupes downe to the reach of our vnderstanding, when it speakes of the *forming* of any one. It is as much then as if *Ieremiah* had said, *that he was created a man, vpon condition that hee should (in his time) be manifested a Prophet.* Neither is it to bee doubted, but he addes that which followeth for a more full exposition, where it is said, *I have ordained thee to be a Prophet vnto the nations.* This then (as I haue said) is no reall sanctification, but onely in regard that *Ieremiah* was ordained a

Galat. 1. 15.

Quest.

Answ.

Prophet

Prophet before he was borne. And yet it seemes strange, when he saith he was giuen for a Prophet *to the nations*: for God meant he should be a Minister *to his Church*. He went not to the Nineuites, as *Ionah* did, neither to other nations: he onely employed his labours for the benefit of the tribe of Iudah. Why saith he then, *he was giuen for a Prophet to the nations?* I answere: Albeit God had especially ordained him for the seruice of his Church, yet did his doctrine appertaine to other nations, as wee shall see hereafter, vers. 10. and it will also better appeare in the progresse of the text. For he prophecieth against the Babylonians, Egyptians, and against the Moabites. To bee short, hee comprehends all the *nations* bordering vpon Iewry, who were therefore knowne to the Iewes. I grant this was accidentall (as they say) but howsoeuer, he was especially ordained a Prophet to his owne people; yet did his authority also stretch it selfe euen to the profane nations. Yea doubtlesse hee therefore speakes honourably (as it were) of *nations* in the plurall number, that the efficacy and dignity of his doctrine might bee the more fully established. It followes.

Obiect.

Ionas 3. 3.

Answ.

Vers. 6. Then said I, Oh Lord God, behold I cannot speake, for I am a child.

7 And the Lord said vnto me: say not, I am a child, for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee; and whatsoeuer I command thee, shalt thou speake.

THe Prophet hauing touched the doctrine of his calling, addes immediatly his refusall, at the very entrance into his office: which hee doth for two causes. First, that hee might free himselfe from all suspition of rashnesse: for we know how much this desire of bearing rule raignes among men, as Saint *Iames* also speakes. *Many* (saith he) *would faine be masters ouer others*, Iam. 3. 1. And who of vs is it that would not willingly bee heard? Because the most part then are too swift in taking vpon them

them this office of teaching: (yea would to God many did not violently snatch it vnto them) therefore *Ieremiah* that he might escape the imputation of one that ranne before he was sent, *affirmes he was constrained to take it of necessity*. Secondly, herewithall also he gets to himselfe the more reuerence, and makes his scholers so much the more attentiue. For why refuseth hee to obey Gods calling, when he is called to his prophetical office? surely the difficulties therof, feared him. This very cause then ought to stirre vp in the reader the greater attention now, by how much the more there was need then, to waken vp the hearers when *Ieremiah* himselfe preached.

Quest. Answ.

If it be demanded whether it were lawfull for *Ieremiah* to refuse the calling of God: The answer is ready; namely, that God bare with his seruant in this behalfe. Why so? Because it was not his purpose either to contemne his calling, or to free himselfe from his obedience, nor to cast off the yoke, that he might take his ease, or that hee might winne credit, or enioy the present commodities of this life: *Ieremiah* regarded none of these things; but looking into himselfe, he concluded he was vtterly vnable to vndergoe so burthensome and cumbersome a charge. This excuse then is added, onely by way of a modest excuse. And thence it was that God pardoned this feare of his; because (as wee haue said heretofore) it proceeded from a sincere affection. We also know, that often out of good principles there sprouts forth some vices: but this notwithstanding, was praise-worthy in *Ieremiah*; namely, that he thought himselfe vnmeet to discharge the office of a Prophet; and therefore desired to bee spared, that choyce might bee made of some other who had better abilities, and larger gifts of the holy Ghost to discharge it withall. To morrow I will finish the rest.

Reasons why Ieremiah excused his not being willing to follow Gods calling.

The Prayer.

Almighty God and heauenly Father, seeing thou hast not onely prouided for the ancient Church of the Iewes in times

past,

past, when thou madest choyce of thy seruant Ieremiah *to exercise his prophetical office therein; but hast also been pleased that the fruits of his holy labours should reach euen vnto vs: grant we shew not our selues vnthankefull vnto thee for the same; but (enioying so great a benefit) let the fruit thereof appeare in vs, to the glory of thine holy name; so as wee may learne to giue ouer our selues wholly to thine obedience: and that euery one of vs may so labour in his vocation to serue and honour thee, that our mindes being all vnited together, wee may endeauour to spread abroad the greatnesse of thy name, as also the kingdome of thine onely Sonne in euery place: till hauing finished our conflicting dayes heere on earth, wee may at last attaine to that heauenly rest purchased for vs by the blood of the same thy Sonne our Lord Iesus Christ. Amen.*

THE SECOND LECTVRE VPON THE FIRST CHAPTER.

WE shewed you yesterday the cause why *Ieremiah* at the first refused the office of a teacher; to wit, in regard hee found himselfe insufficient for so high a calling: for which cause hee termed himselfe *a child*, not in yeeres, but in regard of his ignorance in matters thereunto appertaining.

This word *child* then, is taken here *by way of similitude*: for the Prophet confesseth hee is neither expert enough, nor acquainted with such a charge. For (as I haue said) some too fondly restraine this to his age: albeit then hee was already of sufficient yeeres for such a businesse: yet because he was neither qualified with knowledge, nor other gifts necessary for so excellent a function; he therefore saith, *I am a child.*

Now followes the answere. *Say not, I am a child, for thou*

thou shalt goe, &c. Here the Lord not onely foretels what the Prophet should doe; but tels him his errand, and what is required of him: as if he should haue said, *Thou must obey my voyce; for I haue authority to command thee: goe therefore thou must, whithersoeuer I shall send thee: and publish thou must, all that I command thee.* In which words God aduertizeth his seruant *that the conceit of his owne inability* must not astonish him: for it sufficeth him *simply to yeeld his obedience to this commandement.* And as this doctrine is most profitable, so is it worthy to be well known and vnderstood: for as it is vnlawfull for any to enterprize ought, before he hath considered well of his owne ability: so on the other side, *when God enioynes vs any seruice; with closed eyes let vs forthwith obey his voyce.* Prudence is a vertue worthily commendable in all such as take vpon them to write any thing: which also may bee extended generally to all others, namely, what fitnesse euery one hath, or what his sholders are able to beare, as they say. For whence comes so great audacity and foolehardinesse in many, but from being puffed vp with a fond ouerweening, which in the end proues their owne ruine? wherefore in all actions, the right and orderly beginning is, that euery one take a suruey of his owne abilities; and that he thenceforth carry himsele with a low saile, according to the measure of his gifts and capacity. Thus should we haue none that would rashly intrude himselfe into callings, nor yet arrogate to himselfe more than is meet. But when *God calleth vs*, what though we be vtterly destitute of gifts? we must (for all that) *yeeld our obedience.* Which doctrine is plainly gathered from these words, where God saith, *Say not, I am a child*: that is to say, *albeit thou feelest thy selfe farre short in gifts; albeit thou art well acquainted with thine owne insufficiencies: yet shalt thou goe notwithstanding all this*: that is, *of necessity thou must dispatch the errand wherein I send thee.* For this is that honour which God simply requires of vs; namely, that howsoeuer we finde our selues destitute of gifts to ex-

Note.

cute the thing giuen in charge: yet that we may readily yeeld our obedience to his Commandements.

Vers. 8. *Feare not for their faces: for I am with thee to deliuer thee.*

FRom this verse we may gather, that *Ieremiah was much perplexed*, whileſt he saw himselfe called to so tedious and painfull conflicts, in regard hee had not yet attained such power and magnanimity of minde, that without quailing he durst constantly set vpon so many and violent aduersaries. For he saw well enough that hee had to deale with a degenerate people: and to say the truth, all of them (in a manner) had swarued and declined from Gods Law: so as now hauing a long time reiected that yoke, they began to insult with such fury and rebellion, that they could very hardly bee brought backe to true obedience and moderation. It appeares then that the Prophet was thus with-held, by reason of these difficulties; and therefore durst not vndertake his propheticall office For (no doubt) God heere applies vnto him *a fit remedy against his faint-heartednesse.*

Now what saith he? *Feare not their faces.* For when *Ieremiah* said *he was a child*, hee looked (as I noted erewhile) to this difficulty; namely, That hee was no way able to sustaine those sharpe conflicts which presented themselues before him, if hee once began to encounter with this rebellious people, who were now growne altogether hardened in their bad and euill courses. See then how hee would faine haue *wound himselfe out, and discharged himselfe of this burthen imposed vpon him*; in regard hee durst not frankly and freely (before all men) in plaine tearmes professe how all matters stood: but God who searcheth into mens hearts, and findes out all the secret intentions thereof, *remedies his feare*, when hee saith vnto him, *feare not their faces.*

Besides, this place shewes vnto vs, that euen then, cor-

ruptions so raigned among this elect people, that none of Gods seruants might quietly execute their office. For if the Prophets and teachers had had to deale with a teachable people, there had needed *no feare of quarrels*, nor combats: but where the feare and reuerence of God is wanting; yea, when men are ouer-carried by the violence of their passions and lusts, there can no faithfull teacher duly discharge his duty, vnlesse he bee armed aforehand to the fight. This is it then which God signifies, when hee willes his Prophet *to bee bold and fearlesse*: to wit, in regard he well foresaw there were as many enemies, as there were men, who bragged they were the children of *Abraham*.

But the reason of this confident boldnesse is to be noted; which is added in the next words, *Because I am with thee* (saith he) *to deliuer thee*. For by these words the Lord aduertiseth him, that hee hath sufficient defence in his owne hand and power; lest the Prophet should feare the furie and rage of those of his nation. I grant that from the very first entrance, *Ieremiah* had cause enough to feare, in seeing that he had to striue, not with two or three, but with the generall state of the kingdome: but *God* opposeth *himselfe alone*, to all these mortall men, and saith, *I am with thee, and therefore feare not*. By this then it is plaine, that we then render to God that honour which to him appertaines, when (contenting our selues *with his onely protection*, and safegard) we boldly despise all the men of this world; not fearing to fight against the whole rabble of the wicked, albeit they band themselues against vs by great troups: yea, be their power and forces neuer so terrible, let vs notwithstanding assure our selues, that the onely protection of God is sufficient to maintaine vs against the same. This is the summe and substance of this text. Now it follwes.

How to yeeld God his due honour.

Vers. 9. *And the Lord stretched out his hand, and touched my mouth; and the Lord said vnto mee, Behold I*

haue put my words into thy mouth.

10 *Behold, this day I haue set thee ouer the nations, and ouer the kingdomes, to plucke vp, and to roote out, and to destroy, and throw downe, to build, and to plant.*

Ieremiah mentions his vocation the third time.

I *Eremiah* here comes againe to speake of his vocation, that his doctrine might not be contemned, as if it came from a priuate or particular person. Hee protests once againe then, that he came not of his owne proper mouing; but that he was sent to teach, with authority *from God*. To which purpose it is he saith, *that the words of God were put into his mouth*. This place ought diligently to bee noted; because the Prophet in few words declares whence the certainty of a lawfull vocation is to be fetched, when any mindes to take vpon him the office of teaching in the Church; namely, that he bring nothing of his owne: as Saint *Peter* also teacheth in his Canonicall Epistle. 4. 11. *Let him that speakes* (saith he) *speake as the words of God*; that is to say, let him not speake doubtfully, as if hee broached his owne deuices; but that which he may boldly, and without wauering, deliuer in the name of God. Thus doth *Ieremiah* in this place; for before he desires to be heard, *he affirmes that the words of God were put into his mouth.*

God onely is to be heard in his Church.

Let vs assure our selues then, that whatsoeuer proceeds from mans braine, may lawfully be reiected. Why so? Because God hath reserued this honour as peculiar to himselfe, to bee heard in his Church, as wee said yesterday. Whence it followes, that none are to bee held for Gods seruants, nor to bee reputed faithfull Prophets and teachers in the Church, but those by whose mouth God speakes; that nothing be forged out of the shop of their owne braines, nor ought to be taught there according to their carnall appetites; but that they faithfully bring and publish that which God hath deliuered vnto them.

The *visible signe* was added, the better to confirme the thing it selfe. True it is, that this must not bee drawne to a

generall rule; as if it were necessary that God should still *touch the lips and tongues of all Ministers with his hand*:
1 but two things are heere expressed; to wit, the action it
2 selfe, and the outward signe. As touching *the action*, it is a law imposed vpon all Gods seruants, that they bring not in their owne inuentions, but onely deliuer that from hand to hand, which they haue receiued of God.

But this was particular in *Ieremiah*, that God hauing stretched foorth his hand, touched his mouth: thereby plainly shewing, *that the Prophets mouth was consecrated to his owne vse*. It sufficeth the Ministers of the word then, *that their tongues* be dedicated vnto God; that they intermingle not their dreames nor fancies with his pure truth. But in the person of *Ieremiah*, God meant also to adde *the visible signe* thereof; *when hee stretched out his hand to touch his mouth*. Now God hauing testified that
1 the *tongue* of *Ieremiah* was consecrated and separated from common and prophane vses, in the next words hee
2 giues him power and authority: *Behold* (saith hee) *this day I haue set thee ouer nations, and ouer kingdomes*. In which words, God shewes with what reuerence hee would haue his word to be receiued; yea euen then, when it is preached vnto vs by mortall men. For where is the man that will not brag of his obedience towards God? But in the meane while, scarce an hundred for one, imbraceth his word. For he no sooner speakes, but all generally (in a manner) murmure: or rather, if they dare not furiously oppose against him as open enemies; yet wee see notwithstanding, how some shift off the matter by wranglings: others, howsoeuer they be silent peraduenture in words, yet resist him, and his word, in their practice. This authority then which God attributes to his word, is to be marked, *Behold* (saith he) *I haue set thee ouer nations and kingdomes*.

Moreouer, when he saith, *Behold I haue set thee*, hee therein exhorts the Prophet to be of good courage, that hee bethinke himselfe well of his vocation, that neither

dastardly

dastardly nor seruilely he seeme to flatter men; nor yet to beare with them in their lusts. *See* (saith he); By this word, note, that Ministers cannot execute their office as they ought, vnlesse they set the Maiesty of God before their eyes; so as in respect of that, they scorne whatsoeuer glory, power or pompe it be in men, that may seeme to dazle their sight. For experience it selfe teacheth, that we no sooner begin to haue mens persons in estimation, but we are forthwith surprised with a fearfulnesse to displease them. To what purpose are Prophets and teachers sent then? Euen to reduce the whole world into a right order; that they spare not their auditors, but that they frankly and freely reprooue them as oft as need requires; yea, menace and threaten them, as oft as they see them grow headstrong and obstinate. Let there bee but some outward shew of excellency in men, and you shal see, that the teacher will not dare to offend such; because hee sees them to bee endowed with power, riches, and estimation for their wisedome; but especially if they bee aduanced to high honours. What other remedie is left then, but that the teachers propose *Gods authority* before their eyes; being also fully resolued that they speake in his name? And thus (with an inuincible magnanimity of mind) they shall despise whatsoeuer loftinesse or excellency appeares in any mortall man. Now ye see the scope and drift of this word *See*, or behold; which God vseth, *See* (saith he) *Behold, I haue set thee ouer nations, and ouer kingdomes.* Heere God further testifies, that there shines such authority in his word, that it brings all loftinesse and greatnesse downe to the ground: yea, that *Kings* themselues are not exempt out of the reach of it: what God hath ioyned together then, let not man separate, Matth. 19.6. Mark. 10.9. True it is that God heere extolles his prophets, and exalts them *aboue the whole world*; yea, aboue the Kings of the earth: but hee said but erewhile, *Behold I haue put my words in thy mouth.* It is necessary then, that if any will chalenge to himselfe power and

Note.

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See vers. 9.

greatnesse of authority aboue others, that hee haue Gods word for his warrant, and that hee manifest himselfe a Prophet by some good effects; broaching none of his owne deuices nor imaginations. Heere then (I pray you) take a view of the Popes insolency, and of the impudency of his Clergie; when so malipertly they dare snatch to themselues that which is here said: We are (say they) set ouer Kings and nations. By what law? God hath so told vs by his Prophet *Ieremiah*. But yet of friendship take all with you: *I haue put my words in thy mouth, and haue set thee ouer nations and kingdomes*. Now let the Pope shew his warrant from Gods word, vsurping nothing to himselfe in particular. In a word, let him bring in none of his dreames, and we will willingly yeeld him this supremacy aboue all the world: for God and his word must neuer be sundred. As Gods Maiesty is eminent aboue the whole world, yea, aboue the Angels of heauen; so is there the like soueraignty which alwayes goes with the word. But seeing these swine, and mastiffe curres, are void both of all sound doctrine, and piety: what shamelesnesse, or rather foolishnesse is it in them, to brag *of their soueraignty ouer Kings and nations!* To bee short; this text teacheth, that *men* are not aduanced heere, albeit they be the *Ministers* of the word of life; but rather *the word* and doctrine it selfe. God then (you see) attributes the soueraigne authority *to his word*; howsoeuer the Ministers thereof bee poore, base, and contemptible; and albeit there appeares neither pompe nor glory in them. But I haue told you before, why this clause is added; namely, that the true Prophets and teachers may come furnished with valour and courage: and thus may not feare boldly to set themselues both against *Kings, and nations*; being armed and fortified with the power of the heauenly doctrine.

The Popes insolency noted.

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In the next place he adds, *To plucke vp, to destroy, to breake downe, &c.* It seemes heere as if God of set purpose meant to make both his word, and the ministery of his seruant, odious at the very first entrance. For how could

the word of the Lord bee amiable in the mouth of *Ieremiah*, vnlesse the Iewes perceiued that it was published for their saluation? But what speakes God of heere? *Of plucking vp, of rooting out, of destruction, of death, of perdition.*

Yet afterwards he addes, *To build, and to plant.* God then attributes a *double vse* vnto his word. On the one side, *it destroyes, roots vp, &c.* on the other side, *it plants, and builds.* And yet the question may here be fitly asked, why God in the first place speakes of *ruine and destruction?* for the other order might haue seemed the better; *I haue ordained thee to build and to plant.* For so *Paul* speakes: We; that is, my selfe, and my fellow labourers, haue vengeance ready against all disobedience, and against all contemners and despisers: *after* (saith he) *that your obedience is fulfilled.* Saint *Paul* signifies then in this place, that the doctrine of the Gospell is chiefly and properly dedicated to this vse; namely, to bring men *to Gods obedience.* But *Ieremiah* puts, *ruine and perdition,* before the words, *to build, and to plant.* It seemes then (as I haue said) that he deales preposterously: But we must alwaies remember, what the state and condition of this people was then. For impiety, rebellion, and desperate obstinacy had already (for a long time) gotten such head, that it was needfull he should begin with *ruine, destruction,* and such like things. *Ieremiah* then could not *plant, nor build the temple of God,* before *he ouerthrew, plucked vp, and rooted out.* Why so? Because the diuell had erected his throne, or palace there. For religion hauing been despised there, many yeeres together: then the diuell (as if he had been enthronized into his tribunall seat) raigned in Ierusalem, and in the whole land of Iudeah, without resistance. How could *Gods temple* then be erected, in which he might be purely serued, vnlesse these ruines preceded? Thus the diuell had corrupted the whole land. For (as we know) all sinnes and iniquities raigned therein so generally, as if the land had been replenished with thornes and

The word hath a double vse.

Quest.

Answ.

and beyond. *Ieremiah* therefore could not *plant, nor sowe the doctrine of life*, vntill the land was purged of the varieties of so foule enormities. Thus you see the very cause and reason why he begins with *destruction, and rooting out*: and afterward mentions *planting, and building*.

Note. This heaping vp *of so many words* also shewes, what *deepe rooting* impiety and the contempt of God had taken among them. God might as well in a word haue said, I haue ordained thee to plucke vp, and destroy; and so might haue contented himselfe with two words in this double similitude; as well as hee doth afterwards with those of *planting, and building*. But in regard the Iewes were rooted in their rebellion, and that their pride and headstrongnesse was growne to such an height, that they could neither by and by, nor at the first day, nor yet easily be corrected: therefore the Lord is constrained (as it were) to heape vp so many words one in the necke of another: by meanes whereof he encourageth his Prophet, that without ceasing, he might labour to purge out these filthinesses, which had infected the whole land. Now we see the summe of this place, and also the meaning of the words.

Again, he speaks *of Kings, & nations*, because howsoeuer *Ieremiah* was giuen and dedicated properly to his owne country; yet by accident (as they say) hee was also ordained a Prophet to profane nations, as afterwards wee shall perceiue. It also seemes that God expressely mentions *Kings, and nations* here, to beat downe the fond ouerweening of this foolish people; who (forsooth) would needs be exempt from all reprehensions. Hee saith then, that he not onely gaue his seruant commission to deale with them *of Iudah*, but set him (as it were) ouer *the whole world*. As if hee should say; Alas, you are but a poore handfull; will you offer to lift vp your crests against my seruants? and if you doe, what shall you get by it? For, he shall rule, not onely in the land of Iudah, but also *ouer all nations*: yea, euen *ouer Kings themselues*, that

that is to say, *The doctrine which I haue committed (as it were) to his custodie, hath such power and efficacy in it, that it hath soueraigne authority ouer all mortall men, and not ouer one nation onely.*

And yet we see, that albeit the malice and wickednesse of men constraine God to vse seuerity and rigour; yet he neuer so forgets his nature, but he sweetly allures such as are not become altogether desperate, to repentance; setting the hope of remission of sinnes, and saluation before them: and this course the doctrine of life alwayes holds. For how soeuer it be the *sauour of death vnto death*, to all such as perish: yet is it the *sauour of life vnto life*, to the elect of God, 2. Cor. 2. 15. 16. I grant it will often fall out, that the greater part will conuert the doctrine of life and saluation to their owne ruine and perdition. But God notwithstanding will neuer suffer all to perish. Hee then, will cause his doctrine to be an indestructible seed of life to his chosen: and afterwards he will *build them vp* into an holy Temple to himselfe. This truth wee must hold. And thus the doctrine of God ought not to bee odious vnto vs, though it turne to the ruine of many. Why so? Because it brings saluation (alwaies) to the elect: for it so plants them, that they *take roote* in the hope of euerlasting blessednesse; and after, it makes them holy Temples, consecrated vnto God. Now it followes.

Vers. 11. *And*, that is to say, afterwards, *the word of the Lord came vnto me, saying, Ieremiah, what seest thou? And I said, The staffe of a watchmans*, or, of an Almond tree.

12 *And the Lord said vnto me, Thou hast seene aright; because I will watch*, or hasten: word for word, I am watching *vpon my word*, that is, to fulfill it. V:

God in this place confirmes that which hee said before, as touching the power of his word. These two verses then must be taken heere, as an exposition of the former:

former: for he teacheth no new thing heere, but onely confirmes the former sentence; namely, that the Prophets neither speake in vaine, nor fruitlesly, in regard they are furnished with a celestiall power: as on the one side to build and plant; so on the other side, to destroy and plucke vp, as we haue alleaged the text out of Saint *Paul*, 2. Cor. 2. 15. 16. where the true Teachers are armed with the same power. As also in the other place: We haue (saith he) vengeance ready against all vnbeleeuers, though they burst with pride; though by their loftinesse they fray and feare all the world, yet haue wee the sword of the spirit ready drawne in our hands, to put them to flight, in regard the word of God hath in it selfe sufficient efficacy, to ouerthrow and bring to nought all rebels. 2. Cor. 10. 5. 6.

God then continues on this sentence, when he saith, *Ieremiah what seest thou?* God had presented before him a *staffe*, or a rod of an Almond tree (as some translate it) and the word indeed signifies so much; but in regard it comes of a verbe which signifies To watch, or To hasten, wee cannot properly translate it heere an Almond tree. And yet I denie not but the Hebrew word signifies so much: though (as I haue said) the word which signifies an Almond tree, comes of the verbe which signifies To watch; and they thinke that this tree is so called, in regard it brings forth fruit sooner than all other trees. For the Almond trees flourish (as it is well enough knowne) euen in winter, and in the middest of the greatest frosts. If we say then, I saw *a rod*, or a staffe of *an Almond tree*, and that God answeres, *Thou hast seene aright, because I watch*; then there will be no likenesse in the words, neither will there be that grace of speech: besides, the sence also will be vnapt. Of necessity therefore wee must translate thus: Vnlesse we will corrupt the text, and wrap vp the Prophets meaning in ambiguities. *I see a rod*, or a staffe, of a watchman. Put the case that an Almond tree were heere noted; yet must the tree properly bee called *watching*, if we respect the etymologie of the word: and

the

the thing it selfe also requires it, as all may now well discerne. God then sets this kind before his seruant, namely, that he saw a staffe watching. But wherefore? *Thou hast* (saith he) *seene the staffe of watching aright, because I watch vpon my word, that I may execute*, or accomplish it.

It seemes the expositors restraine these words amisse, to punishments, as wee shall see anon. For thus they expound, that the threatnings which the prophet will vse afterwards, should not bee without their effect, because God is alwaies prest to send whatsoeuer he hath denounced. But (as I thinke) this is to shut vp the sence of this text, into too narrow a roome. For I make no doubt but God doth here in generall, magnifie his word, and sets forth the same in regard of the efficacy thereof. As if hee should say, I speake not to my seruants, as if all their doctrine should vanish into smoke, or that it should fall to the ground; but that the efficacy thereof may forthwith be annexed: as it is said in *Isaiah*, *My word shall not returne vnto me void, but it shall prosper in euery thing whereto I send it*: that is to say, *I will cause the execution to goe hand in hand with the propheticall doctrine, that all the world may know I speake not in vaine: else, that in my word there is not an empty sound, which incontinently passeth away into the ayre; but a solide and certaine efficacy, which shall appeare in time conuenient.* This is the cause why I said that these two verses must bee ioyned to the former sentence, where the Lord said, that hee sent his Prophet *to plucke vp, to plant, to destroy, and to build*. Hee proues it then by other words, to wit, because *he watched vpon his word*, to execute whatsoeuer he hath pronounced by the mouth of his seruants: as if he should say, *It is true that I giue this commandement to my Prophets, that they speake; but in regard they speake from my mouth, I am* (saith hee) *ready to effect and accomplish whatsoeuer I haue enioyned them*. In a word, God heere signifies, that the might and power of his hand, goes with his word, whereof the Prophets are the Ministers in respect of men. Thus it is a generall

Isa. 55. 11.

nerall doctrine, belonging not onely to the punishments, but also to the promises. *Thou hast* then (saith hee) *seene aright, because I watch.* You see then, that God resignes not his office vp to *Ieremiah* heere, although hee vseth his labours in teaching: but he shewes that the power to effect and accomplish whatsoeuer the Prophet should speake, remained entirely in himselfe.

We are also to obserue that which he addes, *Vpon my word to accomplish it.* For God attributes nothing to *Ieremiah*, that was proper or peculiar to himselfe; but he only magnifies the efficacie of his word: as if he should say, *If thou remaine a faithfull seruant to me, I will neither disappoynt thee of thy hope, nor those which shall obey thy doctrine: for I will accomplish whatsoeuer either they or thou hast expected.* Moreouer, whosoeuer hath resisted thee, shall not escape vnpunished. Why so? Because I will bring their waies vpon their owne heads in due season. To which purpose it is he vseth the word *To watch,* or hasten; thereby shewing, that he is ready to put his word in execution in due time. I grant this appeares not so to vs alwaies; and therefore it is said by the Prophet *Habakkuk*, *If the prophecie tary, wait, because it will come, and will not tary*, Habak. 2.3. *God commands* then, that we patiently waite for the accomplishment of his word: but in the next place he addes (as it were) by way of correction, that *it will come*: that is to say, I will performe, and indeed accomplish whatsoeuer my Prophets haue spoken by my commandement. And thus there shall be no foreslowing of it; because the fit season for the execution, depends vpon the will of God, and not vpon mans iudgement. The rest should be handled now; but because I see the time is past, I can passe no further at this time.

Dan. 9.14.

The Prayer.

Almighty God and heauenly Father, seeing it hath pleased thee so graciously to becken vs vnto thee, and that thou hast consecrated thy word for our saluation; giue vs grace

that

that willingly and heartily wee may yeeld our selues subiect vnto thee: that those things which thou hast ordained for our good and saluation, may not turne to our ruine and destruction: but that this incorruptible seed (by which thou begettest vs againe to a liuely and heauenly hope) may take such deepe rooting in vs, and may bring forth such fruit, that thy holy name may be glorified. Grant also, wee may in such wise be planted in the courts of thine house, that we may flourish, and the fruit thereof may appeare in the whole course of our liues, till at the last we come to the enioying of that blessed life, which is prepared for vs in heauen, by Iesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE THIRD LECTVRE VPON THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Vers. 13. *And the word of the Lord came againe vnto me the second time, saying: What seest thou? And I said, I see a seething pot, looking out of the North.*

14 *Then said the Lord vnto me: Out of the North shall a plague be spread vpon all the inhabitants of the land.*

In the former verses, Ieremiah handled the doctrine of his vocation: now he applies the same to the Iewes.

NOw *Ieremiah* begins to direct his speech to the Iewes, to whom hee was ordained a Prophet. For hitherto he hath disputed as touching his vocation, that he might establish the authority of his doctrine; so that hitherto he hath spoken generally: but now hee applies his doctrine to the people in particular. He saith then that a vision was presented vnto him, *of a boyling pot, the face whereof looked towards the North.* Whereas God *askes the question, and the Prophet answeres*; heereby he confirmes his prophecie: for if he had made a bare narration touching the sight of a boyling pot, and had plainly shewed why

why this figure was represented vnto him; the words had not carried such waight with them. But when *God himselfe* comes forth, and tels *what this seething pot* signifies; the prophecie is so much the better confirmed. Neither are we to doubt, but of set purpose the Prophet *vseth this manner of speech, as if God himselfe being there present, shewed, that himselfe was the author of this prophecie.*

The summe. Now the summe is, that the Caldeans were comming to destroy the City of Ierusalem; to take away and abolish the dignity both of the kingdome, and of the Priesthood. This was foretold and threatned before, as well by *Isaiah*, as others of the Prophets: but all the prophecies were contemned: for whilest *Isaiah* liued, the King of Babell endeauoured to curry-fauour with King *Hezekiah*: and the Iewes imagined, that such a succour came in good season, to aide them against the Assyrians: but they considered not that the hearts of Kings are gouerned by the hand of God, and turned which way it pleaseth him: neither did they once dreame, that long agoe, and for many yeeres together, they had (by their sinnes) prouoked Gods wrath against them, and that hee was become their enemie. For as much then, as all his threatnings had been despised, and (in a manner) derided; *Ieremiah* now comes (as it were) betweene, and saith, *that the Northren people shall come*; to wit, as well the Assyrians, as the Caldeans. For we know, that one of the Monarchies deuoured the other, in regard the Caldeans domineered ouer the Assyrians: and thus it came to passe, that almost all the Empire of the East, the Medes and Persians excepted, were subiected vnder their dominion. Now they were *Northward*, in respect of Iudeah. Therefore the Prophet saith, *he saw a seething pot.*

Many by this pot, vnderstand the King of Babylon: but it seemes they mistake the Prophets meaning: and I could easily refell their exposition, but that I content my selfe with the naked and bare truth, which we shall better perceiue in the progresse. *This boyling pot* then, is euen the

nation

nation of the Iewes; as will plainly appeare in the owne place. For my purpose is not now to heape vp all that may be said, on either part. But the people are compared *to a seething pot*, in regard the Lord had boyled them, till they were (in a manner) consumed to nothing. Now it is said, *that part of the pot looked towards the side of the North*; because thence the fier was kindled; as *Ieremiah* by and by expounds it: and the similitude agrees very aptly. For when a pot is set on the fier, it boyles on that side which is neareſt the flame, and all the bublings passe ouer to the other side. It is said then that *the pot seethed*, or boyled; but so, *that the mouth was towards the North*. Why so? Because there was the *fier*; and there was the *bellowes* also. To be short, God meant to shew to his Prophet, that the people were like to flesh, which being put into the pot, seetheth, and after burnes, or (in processe of time) consumes away to nothing. The Prophet saw that the mouth of a seething pot, or, the face thereof, [that is, from the side on which it boyled] looked towards the North: and therefore it is that the Lord answeres (who is the best expositor of this vision) that he had presented to his seruant, *the plague comming from the side of the North, vpon all the inhabitants of the land*: namely, vpon Iudeah.

In which words God protests, that hee had already kindled the fier amongst the Caldeans, and Assyrians; by which hee will seeth his people as flesh, and in the end will bring them to nothing: as it ordinarily falles out, when the flesh continues long in the pot: for if the fier be kindled, and maintained, and be still blowed; of necessity the flesh must vtterly waste away, after it hath been thus sod, or boyled. So in like manner God testifies, that the fier is euen now kindled in Caldea, and in Assyria: which shall not onely seeth the Iewes, but also vtterly consume them.

But hee expresseth the same thing in other words, namely, *that the plague shall come from the North, vpon all the Iewes*. We shall also perceiue by the progresse of the *Vers. 14.*

text,

text, that the summe of doctrine which was giuen to *Ieremiah*, is heere proposed in few words. I grant this is but a part of it, as we haue said: For indeed, God minded to prouide for his elect; and thus astonished them, onely to tame, and not to destroy them. And yet this is but the one halfe of the prophesie; to wit, that they were no longer to expect any grace or fauour, in regard the Iewes had too much prouoked the Lord by their obstinacie; and had so abused his patience, that their impiety was no way supportable. *Ieremiah* then confirmes his prophecie againe more plainly, and poynts at that, as with the finger, which the other Prophets had foretold. It followes.

* or, crie to.

* or, doores of.

Vers. 15. *For lo, I will* call all the families of the kingdomes of the North, saith the Lord; and they shall come, and euery one shall set his throne in the entring in of the * gates of Ierusalem, and on the walles thereof round about, and in all the Cities of Iudah.*

THis verse containes in it the exposition of the former: for God expresseth that more plainly and particularly, which he had but touched before: namely, that the plague should come from towards the North. Hee tels how *himselfe* will be the author of it; but he speakes of the calamity which he was to send: *Behold* (saith hee) *I will call all the families of the kingdomes of the North.* Neither should this prophecy haue had such efficacie, vnlesse this aduertisement had been in expresse words added; to wit, *that the Caldeans* should come vnder the ensigne and leading *of God.* For men are wont to attribute whatsoeuer happens, to fortune: and we shall afterwards see in the Lamentations, how the Iewes were so besotted, that in their miseries they attributed the destruction of the City, Kingdome, yea euen of the Temple it selfe, to chance, or fortune, Lam. 3. 37. 38. For which cause the Lord rebukes them sharpely, for being so blind, in a

thing

thing so so euident and apparant; and because they discerned not aright of his iudgements. The Prophet then hauing testified that the plague should come from the North, addes now in the second place, that it shall not come by chance; but that God himselfe shall be the Generall and chiefe leader of the armie gathered by the Caldeans, who should muster their souldiers from all parts, and prepare an host of men to destroy and root out the Iewes.

The Prophet vseth the word *To cry*; *Behold* (saith he) *I will cry to all the families of the North.*

You see that God vsed sundry and diuers manners of speaking, when he meant to shew, that all nations are so vnder his power and command, that hee raiseth vp armies of souldiers as oft as it pleaseth him. In *Isaiah* hee saith, *Behold, I will hisse to the Egyptians:* and compares them sometimes to Bees. But all these formes of speakings tend to shew, that whilest men bee tumultuous, and trouble all the world; that God on the other side orders and directs all things according to his soueraigne power; so as nothing falles out, but by his gouernment and leading. Wee see then, that our Prophet speakes not like an historiographer, neither foretels hee simply what should come to passe; but hee forthwith addes doctrine thereunto. This prophecie then, *A plague shall come out of the North*, had been bare and naked: but (as I haue already said) hee now exerciseth the office of a Teacher, that his prophecie might become profitable; in that he affirmes, God shall be the Generall, and chiefe Commander in this warre. Isa. 5.26. and 7.18.

Behold then, *I will cry to all the families of the kingdomes of the North.* I grant this was not at that time the onely Monarchie; but in regard the Iewes rested so securely vpon it, coupled with so great a carelesnesse: they feared no calamity. To awaken and to correct this benumbednesse, God saith, that he will cause *all the families of the kingdomes to be gathered together.* It is certaine there were

then many kingdomes, which God caused violently and suddenly to come and rush vpon Iudeah: and it seemes also he hath respect to that vaine confidence, with which the Iewes deluded themselues, thinking the Egyptians should alwaies be ready to yeeld them succour. Because then they were wont to oppose the Egyptians as a target or buckler; yea, as a mountaine or wall of brasse. God derides their folly, in regard that whilest they relied vpon the Egyptians, they thought thēselues sufficiently armed against *all the forces* of the Caldean Monarchy. This is the reason then, why in the first place he puts *the families*, and afterwards, *the kingdome of the North*.

It followes; *And they shall come, and set euery one his throne in the doores of the gates*. Heere the Prophet signifies, that the Caldeans shall haue so great a power, that they shall dare to campe and pitch their tents euen before their gates: and not onely that, but *they shall close vp the wickets also*. For he saith, *the doores of the gates*. And when he saith *euery one*, it is the rather to gaule the Iewes to the quicke: For they resting vpon the succours of Egypt, thought themselues sufficient enough to resist; albeit the Caldeans were in a manner inuincible, after the Assyrians were vanquished and ouercome. He saith then, that the armie shall not onely campe *before the gates, but that euery one shall set his throne there*; and shall erect it, as in a place of quietnesse. In a word, God signifies that the Caldeans and Assyrians shall conquer, to rule; and *to set their thrones* euen in the fields, and before the gates of the City of Ierusalem, as if it were in their owne houses. These things shall afterward be more fully explained, and many circumstances also added to the same. But in the very entrance, God meant to pronounce this sentence against the Iewes, that in good earnest they might feele how their estate was gone.

He saith, *And vpon the walles thereof round about; and vpon all the Cities of Iudeah*. Briefly, the Prophet heere threatens the ruine of the whole countrey; as if he should

say, it is in vaine, for the Iewes trust in their owne forces, and in the helpe of strangers; for God will fight against them, because the Chaldeans and Assyrians shall bee armed by him: so as they shall ouercome, whatsoeuer the Iewes shall plot to the contrary.

Vers. 16. *And I will speake or pronounce my iudgements with them, touching all the wickednesse of them that haue forsaken me, and haue burnt incense vnto other gods, and worshipped the workes of their owne hands.*

GOd heere notes out the cause, why hee determined to punish the Iewes so seuerely. For it was needfull that as well the one as the other, should bee manifested: as first, that the Chaldeans should not breake in vpon them by their owne instinct, but in regard they should come vnder Gods pay, who will both muster, and arme them. Marke that for one poynt. The second was no lesse needfull to bee mentioned; namely, that God was not cruell, neither had he forgotten his couenant, whilest hee purposed to reuenge himselfe so sharply; but that he dealt thus rigorously with them, in regard hee found the Iewes so rooted in their obstinacy, that necessity vrged him thus to afflict and vtterly to consume them. Why so? *because light punishments had profited them nothing at all.* After the Lord had testified then, that he would be the chiefe Commander in this warre: hee therewithall shewes, what iust causes he hath, thus to chastize the Iewes. It cannot therefore be imputed vnto his cruelty, in regard they had formerly prouoked him by their superstitions, full of impietie. He saith then, *I will speake my iudgements with them.* 1

Many of the expositors referre this to the Chaldeans, and Assyrians; as if God commanded them, as chiefe Iudges are wont, to giue that in charge to their bailiffes and officers, which they haue once decreed to bee done and performed: but this exposition suites not well: 2

and besides, the prophet himselfe refutes it sufficiently. For he conioynes this together, *I will speake my iudgements with them, vpon their malice*. But what is it *to speake*, or pronounce *iudgements*? It is, when God cites the wicked before his iudgement seate, and exerciseth the office of a Iudge. And this language is vsuall throughout the Scriptures, as we shall see in the end of this booke; where it is said, that the King of Babylon *spake iudgements with King Zedekias*: that is to say, he carried himselfe towards him as a Iudge; as wee haue it in our ordinary speech. Thus then, God now testifies, *that he will bee the Iudge of his people*: as if he should say, Hitherto I haue been silent; not that the wicked among you are vnknowne vnto me, but it is because I haue borne with those poore wretches, to try if I might see any hope of repentance in them. But now (saith he) *I will be a Iudge vnto them*, in regard length of time hath manifested, that they were become vtterly incurable. here is an opposition then, betweene Gods patience, which hee had long vsed towards them (when though he might, yet notwithstanding hee handled them not roughly, but deferred his vengeance) and this time of his vengeance which was now at hand.

Chap. 52. 9.

I will speake my iudgements then, *with the Iewes*: that is, I will speedily goe vp to my iudgement seat: hitherto I haue forborne to doe it, and haue waited to see whether they would returne to me or no: but seeing they repent not, and that I perceiue well enough they are become graceless, and so peruerse of nature, that they alwayes heape sinne vpon sinne, I will now begin to execute mine office; to wit, that of a *Iudge*. But (as I haue said) wee must keepe in mind Gods intention in this place: for his meaning is, to discharge himselfe of all blame and reproches which men endeauour to lay vpon him; because the worser sort of them are wont to repine at his iudgements, when he chastiseth them. He sets his iudgements then before their eyes; as if hee should say, *You cannot charge me, neither can any obiect against me, that I haue behaued*

haued my selfe seuerely, or cruelly; for my iudgements will be found iust, though I iudge you in rigour: and therefore hee addes, *vpon all their malice*, or wickednesse.

In the next place he notes out one kind; *Because* (saith he) *they haue burnt incense vnto strange gods.* No doubt the Iewes had many waies prouoked Gods vengeance against them; but this one kinde is heere added, because the first spring of all euill was, that they had forsaken the Law, together with Gods pure worship and seruice: yet he names the generall, *in all their wickednesse.* Neither is this clause *vpon all their wickednesse*, added without cause: For his meaning is, that they were not wicked in some one respect alone; but that they piled vp diuers sinnes together, as vpon an heape: now immediatly after hee addes, *because they haue forsaken me:* heere God toucheth *their reuolt.* For it may haply fall out (whereof wee haue daily experience) that a man may faile in some one thing, and another may bee tainted with this or that naturall vice and corruption; and thus (for diuers respects) euery one of vs may bee lyable to the iust iudgement of God: but the Lord heere shewes how the Iewes were so corrupted, that nothing remained sound amongst them: therefore it is, that he puts *all their malice*; and afterward addes, *their reuolt.*

They haue forsaken me: as if he should say, *they haue vtterly denied me: I say not that one of them hath played the theefe, that another hath committed adultery, or, that the third hath sinned in drunkennesse: but they are all become apostataes, All haue denied me, and haue broken their faith and loyalty:* I haue been *forsaken* of them then, and they haue wholly estranged themselues from me. We see now then, how the Prophet sharpely aggrauates the *wickednes* of his nation: but in the end this is added as the patterne thereof; to wit, *that they had burnt incense to strange gods:* that is, they had reuolted from the true God, to giue themselues ouer to idolatry: to which he by and by adds, *they bowed downe before the works of their hands.* For as oft

The reason why stockes and stones are worshipped as God.

as the Scripture vseth these words, it signifies, that there is too too great a rage and madnesse in men; who not onely in stead of God, worship the Sunne, the Moone, and other creatures; but the very Idols which their owne fingers haue made. For whence comes it that the superstitious and Infidels, worship stocks and stones; but because themselues haue framed vnto them, noses, hands, and eares. No man is so mad to adore a formelesse logge, or trunke of wood. Who is it that sets not light by a confused lumpe of brasse, and siluer? Neither wil any bee so senseleſse, as to imagine a stone to bee God: but let there bee but a little engrauing, or some artificiall shape of a man added thereto; and by and by, poore, blind, and miserable Idolaters bow downe before pillars, pictures, and images. Asbe the reason: truly *because they haue made them eyes, eares, &c. they then haue made gods.* Therefore you now see the Prophets drift, when hee saith, *that the Iewes worshipped the workes of their owne hands.* But I doe the rather passe ouer these things lightly now, because it is a doctrine which ye ought to bee well exercised in. It followes.

Vers. 17. *And thou, trusse vp thy loynes, and arise, and speake vnto them all that I command thee: bee not afraid of their faces, *lest I destroy thee before them*; or in their presence.

* or, lest I make thee to feare before their face.

IN the first place God commands his Prophet to proclaime this heauie and wofull iudgement, whereof wee haue formerly heard. For his meaning was not to speake to *Ieremiah* in a corner, or in hugger-mugger to himselfe alone; but he puts him in trust with that which he meant should bee published to the whole body of the people: that is the cause why hee addes, *And thou.* Wee see then that the Prophet was instructed and *taught of God*, that he might bee able boldly and fearelesly to publish that message which hereafter hee will deliuer. These things

therefore must bee read altogether; namely, that God will ascend into his iudgement seat, to execute that vengeance which hitherto hee hath deferred. Secondly, hee will haue *Ieremiah* to be the preacher thereof, which hee is now about forthwith to execute. *Thou then.* This is added by way of a conclusion: for the word *And*, must bee thus resolued: Thou therefore, that is, seeing thou hast heard, that I will shortly bring my wrath and vengeance vpon this people for their wickednesse, and that the period of the time appointed is at hand: seeing also thou knowest that this hath been manifested vnto thee, that thou admonishing of them, they may bee so much the more left without excuse: *Thou then, trusse vp thy loynes.* Thus then wee see to what purpose God speakes to his seruant *Ieremiah*, in this particular manner; namely, that in the presence of the people, he might execute the office of a publike Teacher. 1 2

And hence we gather, that whosoeuer is called to gouerne in the Church of God, hee cannot possibly bee exempt from blame, vnlesse hee freely and bouldly publish whatsoeuer the Lord hath giuen him in charge: and therefore it is, the Apostle *Paul* saith, that hee was pure and cleane from the blood of all men; because hee had taught from house to house, and published that whole councell of God which he had receiued, Act. 20. 26. 27. And in another place he saith, *Woe be vnto mee if I preach not the Gospell, for this office is committed vnto me*, 1. Cor. 9. 16. *Doct.*

Whereas the Lord bids the Prophet *to trusse vp his loynes*, it must be referred vnto the garments which were then in vse among them of the East; as they are also yet vnto this day, for they weare long garments: therefore as oft as they purposed to vndertake any businesse, or iourney, they were wont to trusse them vp about them. He saith then, *trusse vp your loynes*; that is, enterprise and dispatch this businesse which I haue giuen thee in charge. In the meane while he willes him to take courage

and heart to him, that he may (without stop or stay) goe cheerfully and diligently about his calling.

Arise (saith he) *and speake vnto them all that I command thee.* To be short, in these words God signifies, that he is not purposed to doe his vtmost against them, till hee hath once more tried whether any hope of repentance be yet left or no. I grant he knew well enough that they were vtterly incurable: but his meaning was by this, the better to discouer or lay open their peruersity and rebellion, whilest (in the last place) he commands the Prophet *Ieremiah* to pronounce against them this last sentence of condemnation.

He againe repeates that which he said before, *Be not afraid of their faces.* And this exhortation was of great vse: for *Ieremiah* tooke vpon him a very thankelesse office, in regard of men. Why so? Because it was all one as if he had been an herald of armes, proclaiming open war against them, in the name of the Lord of hosts. In as much then as *Ieremiah* brought an expresse message touching the ruine of this people, because their rebellion had been so great, that God testified hee would no more hereafter *shew them any fauour*: this must needs bee an hard saying for them to heare: but especially, if wee consider the pride wherewith the Iewes were possessed. For they gloried in the holinesse of their race and stocke: also, (as we shall see afterwards) the Temple (in their conceit) was an impugnable fortresse (as it were) euen against God himselfe: Being then growne thus obstinate and rebellious, it was very requisite he should bee confirmed in his calling *more than once*, that he might (with the greater courage) set vpon his charge. This is the cause then why this exhortation is redoubled, *Feare not their faces.*

Chap. 16. 13.

Chap. 7.

In the next place he addes, *Lest I make thee feare*; or, lest I tread thee vnder foot. The word signifies sometime to feare, it signifies also, tread vpon. Saint *Ierome* hath corrupted the Prophets meaning, when hee interprets, I

will neuer make thee afraid. I deny not but this is a good and holy doctrine; namely, that God will furnish his Prophet with such force and power, that he shall remaine inuincible against the rage of his enemies: yea, it is most certaine, that God should in vaine exhort vs to quit our selues like men in this race, were it not that himselfe did therewithall inwardly endow vs both with strength and constancy, by his holy spirit: this (I say) is most true; but the word here vsed will not suffer vs so to expound this place. What meant the Lord to say then? (Be it that wee translate, *to tread vpon*, or, *I will cause thee to feare*) the sence will sute very well. For as soone as God hath exhorted his Prophet to bee valiant, and of an inuincible courage; he now addes, *Take heed*; for if thou quailest, I will make thee feare with a witnesse; or, I will indeed trample thee to peeces vnder my feet, before their faces. His meaning then in these words is, that the Prophet shal be sufficiently furnished, if hee acknowledge himselfe to bee sent of God: and if in consideration thereof, hee carry himselfe according to that soueraigne authority which is put into his hands, not fearing the faces of mortall men.

Moreouer, heere is a secret threat included, thus, *looke to it*; if thou behauest thy selfe valiantly, I will bee with thee: and albeit at the first encounter, those that oppose against thee, haue the faces of Beares, and Lions; yet shall they gaine nothing by it in the end. But if thou proouc a milkesop, or a white-liuered souldier, I will put thee to shame; that is to say, thou shalt not onely bee timorous and fearfull, but I will also cause thee to bee despised of all: or, euery one shall be ready to offer thee foule indignities, in regard thou hast made thy selfe vnworthy that I should stand for thee, or giue thee strength and power to put thine enemies to flight. We see then whereunto these words tend, *Feare not, lest I make thee feare*; that is to say, be of good courage, lest worthily thou be put to shame, and lest thou feare them, according as thou well deseruest: yea,

yea, not onely that, but, lest they bruise and breake thee; yea, lest peraduenture they presume to tread thee vnder their feet; because thou (to whom I haue giuen the power of my spirit) shalt thereby vtterly disable thy selfe.

Doct. This text then you see, containes a very profitable doctrine: whence we learne, that Gods seruants are neuer dis-furnished of power, when they conceiue in themselues an heroicall spirit: in regard they know, and are assured they haue God for the author of their vocation and calling. Where this magnanimity and valour is then, God will adde vnto them an inuincible power of his Spirit; so as they shall be feared of all the world. But if they proue base and fearfull, and turne with the wethercocke, being afraid of mens faces, *God will shame and disgrace them*; so as they shall quake at the least puffe of wind, and shall be *wholly dashed to pieces*. Why so? Because they are vnworthy God should aduance them, to whom he reacheth out his hand; whom also he armes with his armour; and (as hath been said already) to whom he giues fortitude and constancy, by which they might terrifie, not onely the whole world, but the diuell himselfe also.

The Prayer.

Almighty God, and heauenly Father, since thou diddest once in such wise vouchsafe to arme thy seruant Ieremiah *with the inuincible power of thy holy spirit, that at this day his doctrine humbles vs: grant wee may learne willingly to subiect our neckes to thy yoke, and so to receiue, yea and to imbrace whatsoeuer thou hast taught vs by this thine holy seruant, that thou raising vs vp by thine hand, and being vnderpropped by thy power and defence, we may fight hand to hand against the world, and the prince thereof, Satan himselfe: that in the meane while each of vs in our places and callings, may so confidently relie vpon thy power, that wee may not doubt to expose our liues to all dangers, as oft as need shall require: and that we may valiantly fight, and also perseuere, till the last encounter be finished, when hauing runne out our*

race,

race, we may in the end attaine to that blessed rest which is reserued for vs in heauen, by Iesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE FOVRTH LECTVRE VPON THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Vers. 18. *And I, behold I haue set thee this day as a City of defence,* or defenced; *for an iron pillar,* or stay, *and for a wall of brasse, against the whole land; against the Kings of Iudah, against the Princes, against the Priests, and against the people of the land.*

HEre God furnisheth his seruant with boldnesse: for it was necessary hee should bee endowed with courage, in respect of that feare whereof wee spake in the former verse. For *Ieremiah* thought himselfe neither apt nor sufficient to vndergoe so heauie a burthen: also, he had to deale with a peruerse and rebellious generation; neither were they a few of them, for the whole multitude were already confirmed in the contempt of God, through an obstinate wickednesse, full of impiety. Inasmuch then as all tast of true religion was gone, and that there was no reuerence of the heauenly doctrine left among this people: *Ieremiah* distrusting his own strength, durst neuer haue taken vpō him a burthen of such waight, had he not been sustained by the helpe and assistance of God. For this cause God now testifies, that he shall be *as a City well fortified, and as an iron pillar:* albeit the word *stay, and bearing vp,* will be apt, and will also agree well enough, in regard it comes of another root, which signifies, to beare vp, or stay: as also, because according to this sence the Prophet meanes, hee shall bee a pillar, not onely

onely to be set vp in some void place, but which shall beare vp the wall or building. The sence is cleere enough: for the Lord signifies, that his seruant shall be inuincible; so as whatsoeuer his enemies deuised or plotted to the contrary, yet they should neuer preuaile against him: as it is in the next verse.

Doct. Now albeit this was long agoe spoken to *Ieremiah*, yet not for him onely; for by good right, all faithfull Teachers ought to apply it to themselues, if so bee they bee well assured that their calling is of God, and that they bee also perswaded (vpon good grounds) that they attempt nothing rashly, but in obedience to Gods Commandement. Whosoeuer is thus stablished in a lawfull calling from God, may well apply this promise to his owne vse; namely, that hee shall remaine vnuanquishable against all the rabble of the wicked, and despisers of God.

We are also to note the circumstances: it might haue seemed sufficient that God called his seruant *a defenced City*; but hee also compares him *to an iron pillar, and to a wal of brasse*: for this repetition confirmes that which we touched in a word before; namely, that *Ieremiah* should ouercome, so as albeit Satan should raise vp against him many stormes, yet the issue notwithstanding should alwaies be happy and prosperous, because he fought vnder Gods ensigne: but hee addes forthwith *against all the land*. It is euident that God speakes not heere of the whole world in generall, but of the land of Iudah in particular: for *Ieremiah* was therefore selected out, that he should bestow his labours for the good of Gods chosen: therefore he saith, *he shall preuaile ouer all the land of Iudeah.*

Kings. It followes in the next place, *against the Kings of Iudah.* We know there was but one King at once in Iudeah; but the Lord exhorts his Prophet *to perseuerance*: as if hee should say, The course of thy warfare shall bee of long continuance; but though it be tedious, yet faint not. The meaning is then, that the Prophet shall not onely wage

battell

battell (as it were) against *one King alone; but when that King shall be taken away by death, there shall still bee new combatters prepared and made ready.* Why so? *Because hee should not so much as dreame of any truce, vntill hee had finished that race which God had appointed him to runne.* For we know that such, who otherwise are resolued frankly and willingly to obey, desire notwithstanding to haue a set time prefixed, that afterwards they may haue leisure to repose themselues: as old souldiers are wont to doe, who commonly haue liberty to tarry at home, after they haue spent their strength in seruice. But God tels his Prophet heere, that after he hath valiantly carried himselfe in his calling *till the death of one King*: that his condition shall be no whit the better for all that, *because others shall succeed in their roomes, against whom hee must of necessity bend all his forces; in regard he shall meet with the like peruersity and obstinacy euen in them also.*

With Kings, he ioynes *Priests and Princes*: and in conclusion, *all the people.* Though some one King (forgetting his duty) becomes a tyrant, and makes his lust a law; yet it often falles out, that there shall be some good rulers and Magistrates, who will bee a meanes to moderate his vnbridled appetites, if they cannot wholly reforme them. For wee see that euen the most cruell tyrants are often brought to bee calmed, and made peaceable by good counsellors. But God heere aduertiseth, that things are now become so desperate in Iudeah, that *if the Kings* bee mischieuous and wicked, they shall also haue *peruerse counsellors*, who in euery thing shall bee iust of the same stampe that they are. *Princes.*

That which followes of the *Priests*, might yet seeme much more prodigious, but that the Scripture in euery place testifies, that the Leuiticall Priests were all (in a manner) degenerate, and become Apostates; so as scarcely one of an hundred was to be found, in whom the least sparke of Gods feare appeared. For as much then as this state was thus corrupted, is it any maruell if *Ieremiah* bee heere *Priests.*

heere commanded to proclaime open warres *against the Priests?* But in the further progresse of the text we shall see then this come to passe.

People. Now because it might seeme the *common people* were somwhat more worthy of excuse, there being often more simplicity to be found in them, than in Princes and men of place (for such as beare rule, commonly faile, either through pride or cruelty; or they giue themselues the raines too much, trusting in their greatnesse and dignities: but (as I haue said) for the most part there is more modesty in outward shew in those of the common sort) yet God heere witnesseth, that impiety had gotten such a head throughout all the land of Iudeah, *that from the very least to the greatest of them, all* were become notoriously wicked.

It was needfull then, that the Prophet should bee throughly armed as I said erewhile. For what thoughts would haue inuaded him, had he not at the first received this aduertisement: when afterward he found (by wofull experience) such pride, yea rage and fury, to possesse the hearts both of great and small, that as an aduersary, hee was to encounter against Gods chosen people, no lesse than if he had had to deale against so many diuels. It followes.

Vers. 19. *They shall indeed fight against thee, but they shall not preuaile against thee; for I am with thee to deliuer thee, saith the Lord.*

IN this verse God in a word admonisheth his Prophet, that howsoeuer he should bee fortified with inuincible power, yet there were *many bickerings* prepared for him; lest peraduenture he might think to passe ouer his charge in sport (as they say) Heere then he shewes wherefore he was likened to a *brasen wall, to an iron pillar,* and *to a City vnexpugnable:* namely, that he might buckle himself manfully to the fight, and not to cast farre from him the feares

Vers. 18.

of

of all dangers, combats, or whatsoeuer might annoy or bee tedious to his flesh. To bee short, we see whereunto the vse of this promise tends, to wit, that *Ieremiah* being vpheld *by the aide and power of the Almighty*, should not feare to oppose himselfe against the Iewes: for what rage or fury soeuer it were that possessed them, yet he should not need to be out of heart for all that.

Hence we may gather a very fruitfull doctrine; namely, that as oft as God promiseth his seruants victory against their enemies, they must not by and by gather this conclusion thence: We may therefore become careless or idle; but the rather to gather in their spirits vnto them, that they may walke in their vocation and calling with inuincible constancy; neuer being weary of well doing. In a word, God promiseth *hee will deliuer him*; but therewithall he also exhorts him *manfully to sustaine all the assaults of his enemies.* *Doct.* 1 2

He saith then, *They shall fight against thee, but they shall not ouercome thee, because I am with thee to deliuer thee.* Hence we learne, that *Ieremiah* was in such wise armed, that he needed not to feare, although he saw present cause of feares before his eyes: for God testifies not here that he shall be *like a wall*, as if therefore he should be free from all assaults: but he saith, *to deliuer thee.* As if he should say: Be prepared to meet with encounters, for if I should not *deliuer thee*, thy life were gone, and thou shouldest perish an hundreth times: *but in the middest of a thousand deathes thou needest feare no danger, seeing I am euer at hand to deliuer thee.* It followes, *Doct.*

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Vers. 1. *And the word of the Lord came vnto mee saying,*

2. *Goe, and cry in the eares of Ierusalem, saying, Thus saith the Lord, I remember thee according to the compassion of thy youth, and for the loue I bare thee, when thou followedst me in the desart,* when thou cameſt after me, *in a land that was not sowed.*

See Vers. 18.

NOw God giues vnto his ſeruant that commiſſion which he was to make report of, *to the Kings, Princes, Priests; and to all the people of the land.* For by *the eares of Ieruſalem,* he meanes, *all the inhabitants of Ieruſalem:* But God heere cloſely intimates, that the Iewes were vnworthy he ſhould any longer bee carefull of their eſtate. What then? There was ſome other conſideration which moued him not vtterly to reiect them, that is, hee waited to ſee whether they were become wholly incurable as touching their wickedneſſe or no. Thus hee begins then: *I remẽbred thee with the kindnes,* or, *for the compaſſion of thy youth, and with the loue of thy eſpouſals.* By theſe words he ſignifies, that he did not much regard what the Iewes deſerued at his hands: nay, he profeſſeth, that hee ſaw no worthineſſe at all in them, which might prouoke him in any ſort to care for them, or to labour their conuerſion by the miniſtery of his Prophet: but what hee did, *was in reſpect of his former beneſits beſtowed vpon them.*

Some tranſlate, I called to mind the piety or mercy of thy youth; and this word *Lak*, that is, *thee*, may bee ſo reſolued, as in many other places. Others omit this word

Lak:

Luk: some adde a copulative, And I haue remembred thee, and thy mercy. But none of these (as I thinke) haue attained the Prophets meaning: although to say the truth, there is no obscurity in the words, if we heere onely supply a particle, to wit, that God remembred his people, in respect of that mercy and compassion which hee had on them, and for that loues sake which he bare vnto them from the beginning. This (as I take it) is the Prophets true and naturall meaning; namely, that God heere takes away from the Iewes all matter of pride and boasting: as if he should say, They deserue not that I should so much as looke towards them; onely my meaning is, to shew my selfe a father to them; not for their sakes, but that the benefits which I haue heretofore bestowed vpon them may not vanish away. In a word, he here renders a reason wherfore he now sends *Ieremiah* after the rest of the Prophets whom he had sent before: as if hee should say, *I thinke this may serue as sufficient testimony to confirme you in the assurance of that fatherly care & respect I beare of you, in that I here send you another of my Prophets, to offer you hope of pardon; if you will come home into the right way, and seeke reconciliation with me. But if you would know the cause why I thus remember you: whence is it, I pray you, seeing you haue forgotten me, and cast my Law altogether behind your backes? Euen because I meane yet to continue in my bounty towards you.*

He names *the mercy of youth* in the passiue signification. For by these words his meaning is not, *that the Iewes were in times past marvellous, but that they had tasted of Gods mercy in them*: yet the similitude which he vseth is worth the obseruing. For God here compares himself *to a young bridegroome, that hath married a faire young damsell in the flower of her youth*: which similitude is very frequent among the Prophets. But I meane not to trauell any further in the exposition of the words now, because wee shall haue occasion to handle them more fully in another place. In as much then as God had married the people of Israell,

by redeeming of them, and in bringing them out of Egypt: that is the reason why he saith, hee remembred the people, *in respect of such a mercy, and of such a loue.*

He puts *mercy*, or liberality, before *loue*. For the Hebrew word signifies, that free fauour, courtesie, or liberality which is shewed to them which are in misery. By this word *loue*, God also in many places of the Scriptures signifies that free choyce, by which hee had receiued the whole body of this people. But the proper signification is here more clearly expressed, when *mercy*, or free fauour is put in the first place, and that this *loue* followes after. I grant hee addes nothing new to the former: but onely the Prophet in more plaine termes shewes, *that this people was loued of God, for none other cause, but in respect of his mercy.*

Heere is a text then very remarkable: for God testifies, that his couenant shal continue stable and inuiolable, notwithstanding the Iewes had perfidiously violated it. For howsoeuer all those that descended of *Abraham* according to the flesh, were not true and legitimate children of *Abraham*, according to the promise: yet God ceased not to continue true, as on his behalfe, so as his gifts and calling were without repentance, as Saint *Paul* testifies, in Rom. 11. 29. From these words of the Prophet, learne wee then, that God contented not himselfe with sending one prophet alone, but continued on this fauour still, because hee would not haue his couenant become fruitelesse. True it is, the Iewes had wickedly broken the couenant: and the multitude also for their parts went the high way to hell and destruction, and were therefore vtterly cut off, as they well deserued: yet would God giue manifest testimonies, that his grace depended not vpon mens inconstancy: as also Saint *Paul* speakes in another place; namely, that though all men should proue lyars, and disloyall, yet will not God therefore become vnfaithfull, but will remaine stedfast in his couenant, Rom. 3. 4. This is it which we gather from the Prophets words,

Doct. 1.

when

when in the beginning he saith, *God remembred his people in regard of the mercy of their youth.*

Whereas hee speakes of *youth*, and of the espousals: hence we gather, that God preuented this people of his free liberality. For what acquaintance or familiarity had they with God, but only in regard it pleased him to make choyce of them. Certainly these espousals had neuer been begun as on the peoples behalfe, vnlesse God had preuented them by his grace. What was *Abraham*? What were all his posterity? God therefore heere signifies, that the fountaine of all these benefits proceeded hence, that he vouchsafed to chuse the people as peculiar to himselfe.

Which he yet better confirmes in the rest of the words saying, *when thou followedst me in the desart, in a land that was not sowne.* Wee know the people behaued not themselues so obediently to God as was meete, no not after their redemption. It cannot be affirmed heere then, that God any way magnifies their deserts, but (as I haue said) he confirmes his former speech; namely, *that hee could not cast off his care of them, whom his kindnes adopted for his owne: whom also he had drawne into the wilderness to serue him, as separating them thereby from all the rest of the world besides*: and yet by way of yeelding them so much, according to his indulgence, he attributes this seruice which the people did him, *in following him through such craggie pathes, to their praise and commendation: as if a young damsell refusing no labour nor trauell, should for the loue she beares to her husband, follow him through thicke and thin.* In the next words to these, he addes:

Dott. 2.

Verl. 3. *Israell is the *holinesse of the Lord, the first of of his fruits: all these that eat them, shall find euill*: others translate, shall sin: but I had rather vnderstand it of the punishment which shall come thereupon: *euill shall come vpon them*: this is put by way of exposition, *saith the Lord.*

* or, as a thing hallowed to the Lord.

GOd doth heere more plainly taxe the peoples ingratitude and vnkindnesse, in that they hee mentions the benefits bestowed vpon

vpon them, which were sufficient to haue obliged them for euer vnto him. Secondly, he shewes how vnworthily the people behaued themselues, whilest they should haue acknowledged so many benefits receiued: and therefore when he saith, *that Israel was holy*, hee speakes not so, to honour them. I grant this is an honourable title in it selfe: *first, that God had set them apart for his owne*; and *esteemed them as the first fruits of his renewe*. But the opposition which is closely heere vnderstood, must be considered; to wit, betweene that so incomparable a grace of God, and the peoples disloyalty; who (notwithstanding his bounty and liberality) did afterwards quite forsake him. It is in this sence then, that *Ieremiah* saith, *Israel was the holinesse of the Lord*: that is, *as one separated from all other nations, that Gods glory might shine there especially*.

He consequently addes, *that he is the first of the fruites*. For albeit all the benefits the earth brings forth, are consecrated vnto God, from whose power it is that they wholly proceed: yet wee know *the first fruites* were selected out, that being presented vpon the Altar, they might be (as it were) an holy and consecrated meat. Seeing God then in the Law, had commanded the first fruits to be offered vnto him, and afterwards to be giuen to the Priests, for this cause alluding to the ordinary custome, *he calles the people of Israell the first of his fruits*. For the nations which were scattered heere and there, were not exempt from vnder his dominion (in regard hee is the Creator of the whole world; and besides, hath alwaies manifested himselfe to be the foster Father thereof); but hee passed by all other nations, to chuse and reserue to himselfe the stocke of *Abraham*, vpon condition to be the guardian therof, by his power and assistance. Seeing God then, by these fauours, had in this sort obliged this people particularly to himselfe; with what a strait and *sacred bond*, ought they for their parts to haue been obliged and bound vnto him? Their disloyalty therefore was so much the greater, and the more odious, in that they light-

ly esteemed such rare and vndeserued fauours, [illegible] had shewed them. We see now then wherefore it is that the Prophet saith, *that the people of Israell were hallowed to the Lord, and were the first of his fruits*: but withall he giue them to vnderstand, that a time will come wherein God will also gather other nations into his Church. For the Iewes dedicated and offered vnto God the reuenue of the whole yeere, by the first fruits. Thus Israell *was like to the first fruits*: in regard God afterwards also receiued strangers: who for a long time had been held and reputed for prophane and vnholy. But the Prophets chiefe drift notwithstanding is to shew how great the people, fault was, in not acknowledging the benefits and priuiledges which they had receiued of God.

In the next place he addes, *whosoeuer shall eate thereof, shall be liable to punishment*. I told you before, that this sense likes me best, because the exposition by and by followes, *euil shal come vpon them*. And thus the meaning is, *that such shall not onely be guilty before God, that shall eate of his first fruits, as hauing offended: but hee referres this to the punishment*: as if he should say, *If the prophane nations presume to eate of these my first fruits, which are consecrated vnto me; they shall not escape vnpunished*. For whosoeuer durst bee so bold rashly to seaze vpon those first fruites which were once dedicated vnto God; God punished such an one as a sacrilegious theefe. But if any had, rather vnderstand it otherwise; namely, that it was not lawfull to offend Israell, or to offer him any violence, because hee was vnder Gods protection, I will not greatly gainsay it. Yet the phrase of this tongue leades vs notwithstanding to follow the other exposition; to wit, that such as shall offend Israell, shall not onely be guilty; but (which is more) they cannot escape Gods correcting and punishing hand. Why so? For, *euill shall fall vpon them, saith the Lord*. In the verses following, hee will touch the vse of this doctrine more at large.

Vers. 4. *Heare the word of the Lord, O house of Iacob, and all the kindreds*, or, families, *of the house of Israell.*

5 *Thus saith the Lord, what iniquitie haue your fathers found in me, that they haue estranged themselues from mee, and haue walked*, or, haue been, *after vanity, and are become vaine?* or, vanish away.

Vers. 3. God heere giues a reason why he had bestowed those fauours vpon the Iewes, of which we heard before; to wit, wherefore he made choyce of Israell, to be a people consecrated peculiarly to himselfe, and to bee as his first fruits. God often times remembers his benefits formerly bestowed vpon vs; either to giue vs hope for the time to come, or that he might alwaies giue vs assurance (whatsoeuer should fall out to the contrary) of our saluation; in regard he hath not onely vouchsafed once to elect and chuse vs, but to be our protection and defence. Yet in this, and in many other places, God shewes how many waies the Israelites were indebted vnto him, that their ingratitude might bee so much the more apparant. He saith then, *Heare the word of the Lord.*

The Preface. He vseth this preface to procure attention: signifying, that he is not to speake of some common or ordinary matter. *Heare then* (saith he) *O house of Iacob; giue eare all the families of the house of Israell.* As if *Ieremiah* should haue said, I come boldly on my message, euen in the name of the Lord; so as I am not much afraid of your defences by which you will labour to repulse the reprehensions of God: I therefore securely stand before you to heare your replies; but I am well assured that you shall be inforced to lay your hand vpon your mouth: wherefore I feare not to cry shrilly in your eares like a trumpet; that I come to proclaime your iudgement and condemnation: if you haue ought to reply, I am ready to heare it; but the truth I know will constraine you to bee silent, in regard your offences are too manifest and abominable. This is

the scope of this exhortation, when he calles thus for audience to all the families of Israell.

Now followes the accusation: *what iniquities haue your fathers found in me, &c. Ieremiah* heere chargeth the people with two crimes: first, for departing away from God, whom they had found their deliuerer: secondly, *that they vanished away in their inuentions*; namely, *for that they played the Apostataes without cause.* For the fault is aggrauated, in that they had *no cause* giuen them so to forsake or estrange themselues from God. Seeing God then had vsed them with all louing respect, and had eased their neckes from their grieuous bondage; seeing also they could not possibly meet with any other, any way comparable to God in kindnesse and truth; they could not say their hopes or expectations were deceiued. And why? *For* (saith he) *you haue followed vanity, and vanity onely is in, that hath caused you to forsake me.*

The accusation.

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I should haue proceeded further, but some other businesse calles me away; for I was sent for, before the Lecture began.

The Prayer.

Almighty God, seeing thou ceasest not stil to cal vs to thee, and that both early and late, and continually exhorts vs to repentance: seeing thou also are pleased to promise vs mercy, when we shall seeke vnto thee for the same: let vs neuer stop our eares against so gracious a benefit; but let vs alwayes remember thy free election, the fountaine of all thy graces, proceeding from thy free loue to vs; that we may endeauour so to giue vp our selues to thy seruice, that thou maist haue glory by our life and conuersation. And though it so fall out, that we now and then goe astray from thee, yet giue vs grace speedily to returne into the right way: and let vs euermore be ready to receiue thy warnings and corrections, that it may appeare we haue been in such wise called and chosen of thee, that we may desire to continue in the hope of our saluation, to which thou

daily inuiteſt vs, and which thou haſt prepared for vs in heauen, through Ieſus Chriſt our Lord. Amen.

THE FIFTH LECTVRE, WHICH IS THE FIRST VPON THE ſecond Chapter.

WE heard yeſterday the complaint that God tooke vp againſt his people. The ſumme was, That if he were to make his defence before any Iudge, it would be found that he had iuſt cauſe to condemne their ingratitude: and as for them, they had no colour or ſhew of reaſon that might cauſe them to wander after vanity; but they were become vaine: that is, they had abandoned him without any cauſe at all, and ſuffered themſelues to be tranſported and carried away by their owne dreames and forgeries.

Verſ. 6. *And they ſaid not*, that is, it came not into their minds to ſay, *where is the Lord that hath brought vs out of the land of Egypt, and cauſed vs to walke through the deſert, by a ſolitary* or, empty *land, and vaſte, in a terrible land, by the ſhadow of death, by a land that no man paſſed thorow, and where no man dwelt?*

* or, Hacarmel

7 *And I brought you into a *plentifull land, to eate the fruits thereof, and the abundance thereof*, word for word it is: To his good: *and you entred into it, and haue polluted my land, and haue made mine heritage an abomination.*

THe Prophet proſecutes the ſame poynt of doctrine ſtill: for God heere blames the people for no ſmall fault, *ſeeing they had forgotten his benefits*: and yet had he redeemed them after ſuch an admirable manner, that it

worthily deserued to be celebrated, not of one nation only, but of all the nations of the world beside. See then how iustly he taxeth the Iewes for their hatefull ingratitude, for forgetting the memory of so famous and incomparable a deliuerance. Had they not at all felt Gods bounty and liberality towards them: nay, or rather, had they had but some little semblance thereof, then their fault peraduenture might haue been somewhat the more excusable: but God hauing not after an ordinary manner discouered his power from heauen, and hauing openly manifested his maiesty and glory, euen in the very eye of the people: what a barbarity was it in them after all these things, to forget God who had so plainly declared himselfe to them by such notable experiments? Thus we haue the Prophets meaning then, when he saith, *they said not.* See chap. 5. 24. For God heere taxeth the sloth of the Iewes, for not considering in themselues how they were perpetually bound with strict bands to the maiesty of God for those great fauours he had shewed them in deliuering them so miraculously out of the land of Egypt.

Where he saith, they said not, *where is the Lord?* He giues them to vnderstand, that hee was alwayes present before them, or nigh vnto them: but they were blind, and therefore had no pretext for their ignorance: for they needed not to haue sought him farre off, not haue fetched many long circuits about. Had they onely then but thought thus with themselues, *Hath not God once redeemed vs?* had they (I say) but thought thus in themselues, they would neuer haue *followed their vanities.* Whence proceeded such a fault then, or rather such a frensie in pursuing Idols? Euen from this, *They would not vouchsafe to apply their minds and hearts to seeke after the Lord.* Thus then the Prophet heere preuents the replies of hypocrites, who would be ready to alleage that they were deceiued, and that they failed rather of ignorance, than otherwise. For it is alwayes the manner of those that are found guilty, to seeke euasions and starting holes, as soone as they

Verſ. 5.

be

be called to an account. That the Iewes then might not be able to bring in their excuses, the Prophet tells them heere in plaine words, that they erred not of ignorance, but of malice, through which they were carried away after their vanities and lies; in regard they had wittingly despised the Lord, and would not so much *as aske after him*, though he was neare enough vnto them.

This place is worthy to be noted: for nothing is more vsuall with the wicked, after they be once conuinced, than to seeke this refuge; namely, that the giuing of themselues to all superstitions, proceeds forsooth, from their good intentions. The Prophet therefore meets with this wile, and shewes, that where the knowledge of God hath been once entertained among men, there his name and glory cannot be blotted out, vnlesse it be of set malice, when they wittingly and willingly estrange themselues from him. And thus this one cause so condemnes all Apostates, that they haue nothing to answere, when they obiect, We were ouertaken through ignorance. For a man shall no sooner bring them forth to the triall, but their malice and ingratitude shall forthwith be discouered, in regard they vouchsafed not to aske, *Where is the Lord?*

He by and by addes that which is the exposition of this sentence. For I told you, that the question is not here of sentencing babes in vnderstanding, but of the Iewes; who by sure and certaine proofes knew that God was their Father. Seeing then, God had manifested himselfe vnto them by so many infallible testimonies, they had not to alleage for themselues so much as any shew of ignorance. That is the cause then why the Prophet saith, *It came not into their thoughts to aske, Where is the Lord, that hath brought vs out of the land of Egypt &c.* This could not be said generally of all nations; therefore I told you before, that this speech is directed particularly to the Iewes, who had tasted and felt the power of God by euident testimonies; so as they could not offend, but of set purpose;

purpose, that is, in quenching (by their frowardnesse) the cleare light that shined before them. Also the Prophet yet further aggrauates their offence, by certaine circumstances: for hee saith not onely that they were brought out of Egypt, but that God was alwaies to them in stead of a Captaine *and leader*, and that for fortie yeeres together: for vnder this word *desart*, he notes the time. Now because the history thereof was fresh in memory; that is the cause why hee thinkes it enough to touch it onely in a word. And yet euen therein he notably sets forth Gods glory, in mentioning *the desart*. But in the first place obserue, that the Iewes were altogether inexcusable, in that they remembred not how their fathers had been miraculously preserued for the space of fortie yeeres, by Gods immediate hand, and not after an ordinary manner. For they had no bread to nourish them, neither had they water: God caused water to flow out of the rocke, and afterwards hee filled them with bread, which fell from heauen: neither did their garments waxe old by length of time. Wee see then, that their fault is heere augmented by the circumstance of time: now follow the things which I spake of. For the Prophet calles the desart, a *dry*, or waste *land*, a *terrible land*, an *horrible*, or horrible *land*, a *land of deadly darkenes*. As if he should say, *you were preserued in the middest of many deaths: for none euer passed through this land, neither did any* (saith the Lord) *euer inhabite there*. Whence appeared your safety then, or from what fountaine? Truly euen from death it selfe, saith he. For, as for the desart, what was it but an hideous spectacle, in which you might from all parts bee viewed, to bee not onely compassed about with one, but with an hundred deaths? Seeing God then (beyond the order of nature) brought you by a short cut through the, from out of Egypt, and sustained you forty yeeres long in the desart: what shew or colour of reason haue you to excuse such a folly, or rather madnesse, that are now so farre estranged from me?

Now

Doct. Now hence we are taught, that the more mercies God hath bestowed vpon vs, the more fiercely shall the guiltinesse of our consciences wound vs; especially if after all this, we forsake him: also, our malice and vnthankfulnesse shall be so much the lesse inexcusable: but most of all, if hee haue held on the course of these his benefits for a long space, and after diuers manners towards vs.

He goes on in the next words, *And I haue caused you to enter*: Ieremiah brings in God himselfe speaking here; namely, how he stretched forth his hand (as it were) to this poore of-spring of *Abraham*; that hee might put them in possession of the land of promise: for as it is said in the 44. Psalme, It was neither by their arme nor sword that they obtained this possession: for albeit they had to fight indeed against many enemies; yet in all their battails notwithstanding, the victory came of the Lord. And thus he might truly and rightly affirme, that they entred no otherwise into this land, than by his conduct and leading: to wit, in opening a way and passage vnto them, and in ouercomming and destroying their enemies, that they might enter into, and enioy the land which hee had promised them. *I haue brought you* then (saith hee) *into the land of Hacarmel*. Some take this to bee the proper name of the place: and certainly mount Carmel is so called, in respect of the great fruitfulnesse thereof. For as much then as this mountaine tooke its name in respect of the richnesse of the soyle; what maruell is it, if *Ieremiah* compares the land of Israel *to mount Carmel*? Others expound it, as if the particle, which imports a similitude, should be heere vnderstood; I haue caused you to enter into a land *which is like* to Carmel: but what needs wee offer violence to the Prophets words. I thinke then, that the nound is a proper appellatiue, signifying fruitfulnesse; namely, *that the Israelites were conducted by the hand of God, into a plentifull and fruitfull land*: of the fruitfulnesse whereof, mention is often made, as well in the Law, as in the Prophets.

Psal. 44. 3.

To eate his fruit and his abundance: that is to say, The end why I brought you in thither, was to enioy the great abundance, and large reuenue thereof. God by these words then meant to make it knowne to the Israelites, that it was their duties to haue been prouoked by such benefits, to serue him in vprightnesse; in regard he had sought by such ientleneſſe to draw them to himselfe, and had vsed them after so gracious a manner. But so much the more as God had shewed himselfe liberall towards them, so much the lesse insupportable was their vnworthy reuolt in forsaking God; and in contemning such abundance and variety of all good things. For which cause he addes afterwards: *And you polluted my land, and haue made mine heritage an abomination:* as if hee should haue said, *This is the recompence and the reward that I reaped from my bounty I vsed towards you. Indeed I gaue you this land; but vpon condition, that you should serue mee in holinesse and righteousnesse therin: but you* (saith he) *haue polluted it.*

Now he calles it *his land*, or heritage: as if hee should say, I so gaue you this land, that in the meane while I neuer meant to shut my selfe out of that right and interest which I haue in it; howsoeuer I was content you should reape the whole commodity of it. He shewes then, that they had wickedly abused his bounty, *in polluting this land, notwithstanding it was dedicated to his name and honour.* He calles it *his heritage*, in the same sence: as if hee should say, You haue in such wise possessed this land by right of inheritance, *that yet the heritage came to you, from me your heauenly father.* They were to consider then, that they therefore entred into this land, *because it was giuen for an heritage to Abraham and his children.* But by whose gift? *Was not God the author of it? Their ingratitude therefore was so much the more detestable, in that they had made such an heritage to become an abomination.* It followes,

God so giues vs leaue so to vse his benefits, that still he reserues the right and title of them to himselfe.

Verse 8.

Vers. 8. *The Priests said not, Where is the Lord? and those which kept, or, had kept, the Law, knew me not: and the Pastors behaued themselues disloyally towards me, and the Prophets prophesied in Baal,* that is to say, by Baal, *and haue walked after things which did not bring profit them.*

1 2 NOw God ioynes issue, especially with those that had *the charge of teaching in the Church, and with those that had authority to rule and gouerne the people.* For it may very often fall out, that the common people will bee irregular, whilest the heads and leaders notwithstanding shal be carefull to walke sincerely and in vprightnesse. But God heere shewes, that this nation was become so degenerate, that *Priests, Prophets, Rulers*; yea, the heads of the people and all, had abandoned the true seruice of God, and all righteousnesse towards men. Now in that *Ieremiah* thus sets vpon *the Priests*, and Teachers, and the rest: he therein excuseth not the multitude, neither goes he about thereby to extenuate or lessen those foule crimes and enormities which were rife in euery place, as we shall perceiue hereafter in the processe of the text: although we know diuers there are, who thinke they may fence themselues against Gods accusations, by alleaging, Wee are not so well instructed, to discerne betweene truth and falshood; is it not enough to doe as our leaders will haue vs? The Prophet then dischargeth not the people, so as to lay the whole fault vpon the Gouernours: but he rather aggrauates the greatnesse of their extreame impiety, in regard *all, euen from the highest to the lowest, had renounced both God and his Law.* I thinke we haue now, the Prophets meaning.

The faults of the Superiours excuseth not the sinne of the Inferiours.

Doct. And from hence wee are to gather, that it is a meere senselesnesse, in all those who thinke they haue said somewhat for their excuse, when they alleage their good meaning; and that they were drawne to the committing of euill, onely by other mens example. Why so? Because it

is an apparant proofe that all things are growne past cure, when God giues *Princes and Priests* ouer to a reprobate sense. For when all order both in the *Politicall and Ecclesiasticall state is thus adulterated; it is a sure signe, that the Commons haue there prouoked Gods wrath and vengeance against them.* It is a iust recompence then, which God rendreth into the bosome of such a people as haue transgressed his couenants, when hee blindes the Priests, the Prophets, with the rest of their Superiours and Statesmen. This is it which *Ieremiah* meant, when hee heere saith, *that the Priests neuer thought of enquiring after the Lord.*

Misorder in Church and Commonwealth, a signe that the people by their sinnes haue prouoked God to anger with them.

He saith afterwards, *those which kept the Law.* The Hebrew word signifies, to hold, and comprehend: it also signifies sometimes, to runne. And thus it may admit two expositions in this place: either that the Priests held; that is to say, vnderstood the Law; or rather, that they had it in their custody: neither will it sute well to say, that they suppressed, or kept the Law hidden, in regard the Lord speakes heere *to them first*, by way of concession or yeelding so much vnto them: but afterwards hee also shewes, euen by this, that they were so much the more wicked, in that they became vtterly careless of their duties. He saith then, *Those which had the custodie of the Law*: not that hee meant they kept the Law of God in truth, nor as if they kept it by them of any pure zeale; but onely in regard of an outward profession of it. For they would needs bee held the keepers of the Law, as hauing the heauenly doctrine thereof closed vp within their breast, like vnto an hidden treasure; in regard *the people were to seeke counsell at their lips, as being the organs and instruments of the holy Ghost.* Thus then, for as much as they bragged of the knowledge of the Law, and that they were the keepers of it: therefore the Prophet bitterly inuayes against them, because *they knew not God.* And it seemes that Saint *Paul* drawes that which hee saith in Rom. 2. 20. 21. 22. from this place, Thou which vnderstandest the forme of the

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Hag. 2. 12. Mal. 2. 7.

the Law, Thou that preacheſt another ſhould not commit adultery, cõmitteſt thou adultery? condemneſt thou Idolatry, & yet cõmitteſt thou ſacrileage? For thou obſerueſt the law, thou approueſt it, thou glorieſt in God; thou haſt knowledge and vnderſtanding. In which words S. *Paul* diſcouers the wickedneſſe of hypocrites; for they are the more worthy to be deteſted, by how much the more they are ſwollen with pride and vaine-glory; and yet in the meane while profane the ſacred name of God, whileſt they thus brag; we are preachers and teachers of it, and are (as it were) his Prophets. We ſee now that this which he puts heere in the ſecond place, belongs chiefly to the *Prieſts*; who are therefore called the guardians of the Law, becauſe it was committed vnto them by right of their ordination, as we may gather out of Mal. 2. 7.

Hag. 2. 12.

By way of conſequence he addes, *that the Paſtors behaued themſelues perfidiouſly, or diſloyally, towards God.* This may be referred as well to the Kings Councell, as generally to all the Gouernours of Cities. And for my part, I nothing doubt, but the Prophet meant to comprehend all ſuch as had any charge of gouernment ouer the people of God. For Kings, and their Counſellors, as alſo the Prophets, are vſually ſtiled by this title of *Paſtor*.

He ſaith moreouer, *That the Prophets prophecied in Baal.* The name of a Prophet in it ſelfe is a ſacred title: but *Ieremiah* (according to a common errour) calles them ſo in this place, who were nought elſe indeed, but meere deceiuers and couſeners of the people. For God had depriued them of all light of true knowledge. Notwithſtanding, becauſe they ſtill retained a reputation among the people, as if they had been true Prophets: therefore *Ieremiah* ſtickes not to grant them this title; as well inregard of their duty, as of their vocation and calling. Euen as we at this day call them Biſhops, Prelats, Primats, and Fathers, who brag much of performing the duty and office of Paſtors in the Papacie; howſoeuer we know ſome of them

them are wolues, and others of them dumbe dogs; yet we yeeld them these titles, wherein they glory, because they deserue double condemnation for vsurping wickedly (and with an intolerable pride full of sacriledge) these sacred titles; and for dispoyling the Lord of that honour which by good right appertaines vnto him. So *Ieremiah* now whiles he calles them *Prophets*, meanes those impostors who then wickedly seduced the people.

He saith, *they prophecied in* or by *Baal*, that is to say, they reuerenced idols more than the true God. We know this name of *Baal* went then for currant in euery ones mouth. The Prophets sometimes call all sorts of idols *Baalims* in the plurall number. But because *Baal* signifies a Patron; as oft as the Prophets mention either *Baal* in the singular number, or *Baalims* in the plurall; they meane thereby all those petty gods whom the Iewes had gathered together: as if God, not content with his sole and onely power, needed some fellow-helpers to bee ioyned with him, as in the Papacy; where, at this day, they sticke not to confesse that there is one soueraigne Maiesty; but in the meane while they make none account of him, neither attribute they any more to him, than they doe to their stockes and stones which they forge at their pleasure. The same vice raigned then among the Iewes, yea among the Pagans. For both confessed freely and simply that there was but one soueraigne power; yet had they an infinite troupe of dunghill gods, who were so many *Baalims*. Therefore when the Prophet saith heere that such as had the charge of teaching, *ministred*, or prophecied *in Baal*: he therein opposeth this name, to the true and onely God: as if he should say, The doctrine of the word was corrupted by them, because they passed their limits, & continued not within those bounds of the true and sincere doctrine contained in the Law; but mingled many abuses and corruptions therewith, which they had gotten in together from all parts: to wit, those troupes of gods whom prophane people had forged. And yet the

Prophet insists not vpon the word, or name. For haply those great clerkes pretended the name of the eternall God, yet falsly: but God is no sophister. Neither are the Papists at this day to imagine that they differ ought from these ancient seducers, because they pretend the name of one God: for it hath euer been so. It is not of yesterday that Satan hath begun to transforme himselfe into an Angell of light; but in euery age these Doctors haue on this manner reached forth their poyson; that is, all their errours and deceits, in this golden cup. Although the Prophets then at that time boasted they were sent of God, and that with open mouth they feared not to stile themselues the seruants of the God of *Abraham*: yet all this was but wind: for they intermingled therewith the corruptions which they had learned from the wicked superstitions of the Gentiles.

It followes: *And they went after those that profited them nothing*. He againe amplifies their fault by a close comparison, namely, that they had despised him, whom by so many experiences they had knowne to bee their father, and author of their saluation; whose power (as you would say) they had felt with their hands: all which notwithstanding, they ceased not still to follow their owne inuentions; albeit they saw nothing in any of their idols, which might bee of worth to draw the affections of the Israelites to the liking of them. Seeing therefore they followed their vaine and fruitlesse deceiuings; thereby their crime is made so much the more odious and detestable.

Vers. 9. *Therefore will I yet contend*, or plead *with you saith the Lord, and will rebuke your childrens children.*

THat which is heere added, is not of small consequence: for the Prophet giues them to vnderstand, that if God in former times chastised the peoples treacheries and treasons; that himselfe notwithstanding as on his behalfe remaines iust: as if he should say, *Thinke not you*

are

are rid of all your afflictions, albeit I haue already soundly scourged you and your fathers for your offences and rebellions. For you walking still in the same course, there being neither end nor measure in your sinnes; you may well thinke I will not depart from my right, but I will on the other side pursue you, your fathers, and your whole race, to the vtmost. We haue now the Prophets meaning. For it is an ordinary custome among hypocrites, shamelesly to shake of all feare, but then especially when the Lord hath once made them feele the rod. Why so? Because they imagine hee will content himselfe to haue punished their wickednesses once. But in the meane while they doe not so much as dreame that he corrects the sinnes of men but lightly, 1
thereby to bring them to repentance; yea, and that albeit 2
he be seuere, yet he fauours his blowes, to the end he may 3
still leaue place for hope: also, that sinners in looking for pardon for their transgressions, might so much the more cheerfully returne backe againe into the right way. Hypocrites neuer dreame of this: but contrariwise they thinke God at the first blow displayeth his whole indignation and rigour, so as by meanes heereof they promise to themselues impunity for euer after. As for example, if God brings vpon some countrey, or city, bee it warre, plague, or famine; whilest the smart lasts you shall see the terrified, & grieued: and the greater part who God hardies in this kind, will mourne, sigh, & lament: but God no sooner giues them any respite, but they shake their eares (as they say) and with the dog returne vnto their vomit; neuer calling to mind their faults formerly committed. Hypocrites therefore must of necessity be brought to vnderstand (as we see *Ieremiah* heere doth) that God so corrects mens sinnes, that he ceaseth not for all that to hold on his authority and right euen to future times, when hee sees men so refractary and headstrong, that they profit nothing by all the chastisements he inflicts vpon them.

The nature and practice of hypocrites described.

Yet thou (saith he) I make no question but this threatning did much exasperate the minds of this nation. For,

not fearing so presumptuously to murmure against God (as in many places we see they did) where they stieke not to tell him to his face that his wayes were thornie, and (as it were) full of briars: it is not hard to iudge whether they spared the Prophets or no, as wee shall see in due place. For they imposed very odious names vpon the Prophets; what? These Prophets haue nothing in their mouthes but Burthens, Burthens: as if (belike) God meant without ceasing to thunder against vs; better it were for vs to shut our eares, than thus still to haue them beaten with such menaces, seeing they bring nothing with them but feare and terrour. Thus it is most certaine that these things were very offensiue to the Iewes, when the Prophets said, *God will yet plead with you*; but thus it was fit it should be.

Ezech. 18.25. and 33.20.

Doct. From this place let vs learne then, that if God now and then rebukes vs for our sinnes, and that not onely with words, but with blowes also; putting vs in mind of our faults that are past: let vs not thinke hee will so quit vs of one offence, as if we might be careleſse for the time to come: but so much the more as he hath summoned vs to true repentance, let vs euermore bethinke vs of that which is heere said, *God will yet contend or plead with vs.*

Now this *pleading* is to bee vnderstood of the effect: for *Ieremiah* speakes not heere simply of doctrine; but his meaning is, that the Iewes shall come to an account before Gods iudgement seat, in regard they ceased not to prouoke his wrath against them; and the same also hee threatens *against their children, euen to the third generation.* Now it followes.

Vers. 10. *Truly*, or, for, *goe to the iles of Chittim*, of Greece, that is to say, to all the regions beyond the sea, *and see, and send to Kedar*, that is to say, to the opposite region, namely, towards Arabia, *and consider diligently, and behold if it hath bin so done*, that is, if such a thing hath been done.

11 *If any nation hath changed their Gods, which yet are no Gods; and my people haue changed their glory for that which profits them nothing.*

IN these words (by way of comparison) hee amplifies both the leaudnesse and vnthankfulnesse of his countreymen the Iewes, shewing how they were become *more light and inconstant, than any of the profane nations.* For he affirmes, that euery nation cleaued so fast to that religion they had receiued from their ancestors, that they neuer changed. How could it fall out then, that the God of Israell should be thus contemned and reiected of his people? If such a constancy were to be found in those that stood in a false religion, why was not the truth kept inuiolable of them, who were taught and instructed by Gods immediate voyce, as if they had beene rapt vp into the third heauens?

The summe. This then is the Prophets meaning when he saith, *Goe to the iles of Chittim, and send to Kedar.* On the one side he heere comprehends Greece; and on the other side the East: but it is by taking a part for the whole. For the Hebrewes (as wee haue seene in *Daniell*) call the Greekes *Chittim*: although others are of opinion, that by this word the Macedonians are vnderstood. But without all controuersie, vnder this word, he comprehends al Greece; and not onely the iles of the Mediterranium sea, but all Europe: so that this word extends it selfe to all these parts, to wit, to all France, and Spaine. I grant that this word is sometime taken apart; but when it is taken generally, the Hebrewes (as I haue said) haue been wont to speake of the French, Spaniards, Germans, and Grecians. Now in that they call the regions farre remote from the sea, *iles*; it is because they had not much traffique with nations farre off: so as they esteeme all to be iles, which lie beyond the sea. And the Prophets also follow that phrase of speech, which was vsually receiued of the vulgar sort. He commands them then *to goe to the iles*, or to

the regions, as well Southward, as Northward. Secondly, hee willes them on the contrary to send towards the East, and to consider the state thereof, as well into Arabia, as to India; to the Persians, and other regions. For vnder this word *Kedar*, he comprehends all the nations of the East: but he chiefly mentions Kedar, in regard they were a more barbarous people than any of the Medes or Persians, or such as were most renowned: which hee doth of purpose to disgrace the Iewes. *Goe then, or send through all the parts of the world, and see and consider diligently: see and send*: as if hee meant to say, The Iewes are growne so senseleſſe, that it is impossible to recouer them *with one word, or a bare admonition*. This is the reason then why he exhorts them so carefully *to enquire*; notwithstanding the thing were more than apparant already. But (as I haue said) this so diligent an enquiry, is not to bee referred to the difficulty of the fact; but it is to conuince the Iewes, who were become so sottish and peruerse, that albeit their owne consciences conuicted them of impiety, yet they ceased not for all that, to sooth themselues vp still in their vices. He saith then, *Truly, Goe to theiles*, and after, *see if the like thing be done*: that is to say, you shall not possibly meete with the like fearefull and prodigious thing.

The exposition followes, namely *because no nation had changed their Gods, which yet were no Gods*: that is, *religion is so setled and established amongst all other nations, that they will not by and by change their Gods, but they will worship those whom they haue receiued by tradition from their fathers: and yet* (saith he) *they were no Gods*. If he had onely said, There is no nation that hath changed their Gods, it had not gauled the impiety of the Iewes so much to the quicke. But the Prophet takes this for granted, that whatsoeuer inuentions and superstitions raigned amongst the Gentiles, proceeded from no other fountaine, than meerly from ignorance; and yet notwithstanding they claue stedfastly and constantly to their inuentions: neither

doth

doth the Lord say this, as if hee praised them for it: his meaning is not that this obstinacy of the Gentiles deserued any such things at his hands, because they neuer shranke from their superstitions: but in regard of his own people, this constancy might seeme (after a sort) praiseworthy. We see then how these members should be read all with a breath, thus: *Although there be no nation vnder heauen but you, that worshippeth the true God; yet their religion (such as it is) they constantly hold; but you haue disloyally forsaken me, (me, I say) who am not some fained thing, but your glory.* The words next inserted heere, are set as opposite to these vaine fallacies of the Heathen Gods, when he saith, *my people haue changed their glory.* For they knew right well, and that not onely as they were taught in the Law, but by most infallible experiences also, *that God was their glory*: yet could not this with-hold them from forsaking him. It is as much then as if *Ieremiah* had said, *All nations at the last day shall rise vp in iudgement against Israell.* Why so? Because such an obstinate persisting in so foule an errour, will manifest, that the Iewes are therefore the onely Apostataes, in that they haue forsaken the true God: yea, euen that God, who had openly declared his power and magnificence in their sight. But if any shall aske, Haue none of the nations euer changed their Gods? In the first place we know, that this principle went for currant euery where among them; namely, that no innouation was to be tolerated in the forme of their religion. To which purpose it is that *Zenophon* so highly magnifies that oracle of *Apollo*, who answered, that those Gods were of right to bee worshipped, which had been receiued successiuely from their elders. The diuell also had thus bewitched all nations; namely, with this maxime, God will neuer like of nouelty, therfore satisfie your selues with the customes and traditions which haue been left you from hand to hand by your ancestors. This principle then remained sure, as well among the Grecians, as among them of Asia and Europe: therefore that which

Quest.

Answ. 1.

See to this purpose Valerius maximus, lib. 1.

the Prophet here saith (for the most part) holds alwayes
2 true. But we know when comparisons are brought in about the doing of any thing; it sufficeth to alleage that which was most acted: and as *Aristotle* saith, That which is most receiued by continuall vse and custome. Thus we see then, that *Ieremiah* doth not vnaptly reproch the Iewes with their lightnesse, in saying, *That no nation had changed the gods which it had forged:* but *that this people had denied that God, who had been their glory:* that is, who had giuen them sufficient matter to glory in.

The Prayer.

Almighty God, seeing thou hast been pleased so familiarly to manifest thine owne selfe vnto vs, not onely by thy Law and Prophets, but also by thine onely Sonne; so as the knowledge of thy truth ought now to take deepe rooting in vs: grant wee may continue stedfast and Immoueable in this thine holy calling, profiting therein daily more and more, and alwayes hastening to arriue at our desired hauen: and so humble vs also vnder thy mighty hand, that we may know thou hast chastised vs with thy fatherly rods: moreouer; that wee may from day to day haue such a sanctified vse of these thy corrections, till being at the length purged from all our vices, we may atttaine that glory wherein being possessed of life and immortality, which hath been once manifested to vs in thy Sonne Iesus Christ, we may perfectly magnifie thy high and excellent name. Amen.

LECT.

THE SIXTH LECTVRE, WHICH IS THE SECOND VPON THE second Chapter.

Vers. 12. *O ye heauens, be astonied at this, and tremble for feare; and be vtterly confounded*, or, dried vp, *saith Iehouah.*

AFter the Prophet saw hee had to deale with men that were growne vtterly senceleſſe and past feeling: he now directs his speech *to the heauens*. Which kind of speech is very vsuall with the Prophets, namely, to call heauen and earth to be witnesses of their words, albeit they be vtterly void of vnderstanding: and to turne their speech from men, whom they see to be destitute of reason and iudgement. And this they were wont to doe, when they perceiued that things grew desperate; to wit, when men refused to be taught. This is the reason then, why the Prophet now commands *the heauens to tremble, and to be astonied, and to be brought (as it were) to nothing*: as if hee should say, This is so prodigious a thing, that (in a manner) it ouerturnes the whole order of nature; euen as if heauen and earth were mingled together. Now wee haue the Prophets meaning: for by this manner of speech hee meant to shew how odious the impiety of the people was, when *the heauens* which haue no vnderstanding, ought iustly to blush at such an horrible disorder. As touching the words: some translate *O ye heauens be desolate*; and afterwards reiterate the same signification. But because the Hebrew word signifies to bee astonied: the reading which I haue followed, agrees best to this place,

to wit, *O ye heauens be astonied:* and then, *tremble at this, and be dried vp,* For the Hebrew word signifies, to become dry; and it also signifies to be brought to a wildernesse, or desolation.

Vers. 13. *Certainly,* or, for, *my people haue committed two euils; they haue forsaken me the fountaine of liuing waters, and haue digged pits,* or cesternes, *yea leaking,* or broken *cesternes, that can hold no water.*

IF any thinke the Prophet renders a reason heere, why he would haue the heauens astonished and tremble, it must be turned, *for, my people haue committed two euils:* but for mine owne part I thinke the verse which immediately before I expounded, depends vpon the former sentences. The Prophet had said, Goe to forraine countreys; and see if any nation haue changed their Gods, which yet are no Gods, but meere fictions and lies. And therefore to conclude this matter withall, the Prophet (as I take it) addes this exclamation, saying, *O ye heauens be astonied.*

See Vers. 10. 11.

See Vers. 12.

Now it followes, *Certainly my people haue committed two euils;* first, *in that they haue forsaken me:* and secondly, *in that they haue forged false Gods.* If any man should cast off an ancient friend, to fall in league with a new; this were both vnreasonable and vnhoneſt: but to doe this where no benefits were to bee obtained; then, it would sauour not onely of lightnesse, but of folly ioyned with a kind of frensie. Thus then if I reiect that which I know will yeeld me profit, to chuse that which will bee hurtfull vnto me: shall not such a choyce manifest to all, that I am out of my wits? You see what the Prophet meanes then in this place, when he saith, This people not onely failed in forsaking the true God, but that without any reward at all, they ranne after idols, which could doe them no good.

Vers. 13.

Simile.

He saith, *they committed two euils:* first, in forsaking God:

God; secondly, in following false gods, such as mens braine had forged. But the better to amplifie the hainousnesse of the crime, he vseth a similitude, when hee calleth God *the fountaine of liuing waters*: and compares the idols *to leaking and broken cesternes, which can hold no water*. If any man should leaue *a liuing fountaine*, to get vnto himselfe *a cesterne*; were it not a great folly? For cesterns are alwayes subiect to leake, and to bee drawne dry, vnlesse they be supplied with water by some other meanes: but a fountaine hath the spring in it selfe. Moreouer, look, where there is a vaine of liuing waters, (that alwayes runs and neuer failes) there the water is best and wholsomest. Raine waters which fal from the clouds into a cesterne are neuer so wholesome as those which flow naturally from a liuing vaine. But what say you then, when the vessell shal not be fitting to retaine the water, but shall still bee leaking and running out, because of the diuers creuisses which are therein? You see then how God by this similitude taxeth the folly of the people, for forsaking him, albeit he was *a fountaine*; yea, *a fountaine of liuing waters*. And secondly, that the people also desired to chuse things of no worth, when they gaue themselues to dote vpon idols. For what good is to be found in them? truly a shape and resemblance onely. For the superstitious sort thinke they loose not their labour, whilest they honour those gods which themselues haue deuised, but looke for some recompence at their hands. There are some formes then you see in false religions: and therefore the Prophet compares these false gods to pits, in regard of their depth and hollownesse: but in the meane while not a drop of water to be found in them. Why so? Because they are crackt and broken cesternes. Now we haue the Prophets meaning, to wit, we can no way excuse our selues from being found worthy of condemnation, when we forsake the true and onely God. Why so? Because in him wee haue the fountaine and well-spring of all benefits, whereout we may draw our fill. Shall we then despise Gods liberality;

lity; which is able perfectly and fully to make vs happy? Oh, how great is such an vnthankfulnesse and peruersity! and yet shal God notwithstanding be alwaies vnchangeable like himselfe. Wherefore if hee bee iustly stiled *the fountaine of liuing waters*; such an one will he be vnto vs at this day, if we hinder him not by our owne malice. In the meane while the Prophet addes another crime to the former: for wee no sooner turne our backes vpon God, but our hopes will forthwith faile vs. And howsoeuer for a time we may imagine we haue *pits*, or rather fountains; yet come we once to stand in need of them, wee shall not find so much as one drop of water in all our fond imaginations, but *cesterns*, meerely dry and void of liquor. It followes.

Vers. 14. *Is Israell a seruant, or is he borne in the house? why is he made a prey?*

15 *The Lions shall roare*, or, yell vpon him: some translate Lions whelps; and the word here vsed, oft times signifies, young Lions; but then especially, when it is ioyned with other words of the same kind: otherwise being vsed by it selfe, I alwayes interpret it generally, for Lions; *they made their voice to be heard: they brought his land to desolation, his cities are burned*, or, destroyed, *without an inhabitant.*

16 *The sonnes of Noph also*, that is to say, of Memphis: for the Hebrews call the chiefe City of Egypt, Memphis, and Thaphnes; or, according to the Greekes, Thapis, *shall breake thine head.*

17 * *Hast thou not procured these things vnto thy selfe, because thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God, when he led thee by the way?*

* or, hath not this been done vnto thee.

WE must reade all these foure verses together, because the Prophet in the first of them shewes, that the Iewes were not thus miserable, *in their first estate*, but it proceeded from a new cause; and in the latter verse he

he sets downe the cause it selfe. In the fourteenth verse therefore he askes, saying, *Is Israel a seruant? or, a seruant borne in the house?* God had adopted this people to himselfe, and had promised hee would shew himselfe in such wise bountifull vnto them, that they should bee euery way happy and blessed; yea a mirrour of happinesse. *In thee* (saith he) *shall all the nations of the earth bee blessed*, Genes. 12. 3. and 22. 18. and 26. 4. and 28. 14. Wee see then what Israels condition was at the first; truly, most excellent, *as hauing the preheminence aboue all other nations*, in regard Israel was Gods deare darling; Gods heritage: and an holy and royall Priesthood, Exod. 19. 5. The Prophet therefore, *admiring Israels estate now, and asking as of a thing strange and vnwonted, Is Israel a seruant?* Surely he was once free aboue all other nations: for hee was Gods eldest son. There must needs be some cause sought out then, how hee is become thus miserable. For afterwards he saith, *the Lions roared and yelled vpon him: his Cities were burned, or destroyed: his land was made desolate.* 1 2 3 1 2 3

Lastly, he addes in vers. 17. *Is not this done vnto thee?* Againe, this *interrogation*, is as much as a double affirmation; for it puts the thing out of question (as wee vse to speake.) as if he should say, *What cause canst thou alleage that thou art in this wofull taking, and that euery one hath set himselfe against thee, so as thou art made a prey to the whole world? Whence (I pray thee) haue these things come vnto thee? Haue they not proceeded from thine owne wickednesse?* We now see the Prophets meaning. But that wee may yet vnderstand him more throughly, it is to bee noted, that God heere calles the benefits which hee had bestowed vpon the Iewes to mind, to shame them withall. In regard the children of *Abraham* then, had receiued so many singular gifts and graces from God, that they were esteemed before all the world besides: this their dignity is set before them, but to their disgrace. As if hee should say, God hath not deceiued thee in promising to deale liberally

berally with thee: his adopting of thee to be his son, was no fabulous nor vaine thing. Thou then shouldest certainly haue been the most happy nation in the world, had not thine owne wickednesse procured vnto thee the contrary. Now ye see the reason of the Prophets demand, *Is Israel a seruant? or, borne in the house?* By nature indeed they were no whit better than any other nation: but in regard God had chosen them to be his peculiar inheritance, and had giuen them so excellent a prerogatiue; therefore the Prophet now askes *whether they be seruants* or no. As if he should say, Whence is it, that wee see not that happinesse and blessednesse shine in thee now, which God once promised vnto thee? For this is certaine, God for his part deceiues none. It must needes follow then, that thou hast by thine owne deserts procured vnto thy selfe these miseries.

And when he saith, *why then is he spoyled?* Hee shewes that if he had not been depriued of Gods protection, hee should not in such sort haue bin made a prey to the lust of his enemies. He was laid open to the spoyle then, only be-
Deut. 32. 30. cause God had forsaken him: as it is written in the song of *Moses, How should one of you chase a thousand, & two of you put ten thousand to flight, except our strong God had sold vs, and that the Lord had shut vs vp?* For *Moses* there closely puts the people in mind, of what, and how many noble and admirable victories they had obtained ouer their enemies: and by meanes thereof he left it to the consideration of the successors that should be afflicted, whence this change came; namely, that there needed but one enemie
Psal. 44. 5. 6. 9. to chase a thousand: that is, notwithstanding they should be the greater part, yet their enemies should put them to flight. But what was the cause of this? For in former times they were not wont to turne their backs vpon their enemies, but contrariwise to driue them before them: it followes then that they were thus captiuated not of men, that pursued them; but of God. Also the Prophet in this place shewes, that Israel *was not made a prey*, but in regard

that

thee God had left them succourlesse.

In the next place he addes, *The Lions roared upon him.* It seemes the Prophet compares not Israels enemies to Lions simply, in respect of their cruelty; but rather by way of contempt: as if hee should say, Israel not onely feeles men his aduersaries, but euen wild and sauage beasts. Now this is a greater reproch, when God suffers vs to be torne in pieces by wild beasts. It is as much then as if he had said, Israel is thus miserably handled, that hee is not onely exposed to the power and will of man to bee put to death, that is, by the hands of his enemies, but is euen *made a pray to brute beasts.* And he addes here, *that they yelled,* as if he should say, Israel who was wont to be protected by Gods powerfull hand, is now become the food of cruell and rauenous beasts: so as the Lions with cruell roare (as it were) vpon him. Then without any metaphor he addes, *that his land is laid waste, and his Cities burnt without an inhabitant:* neither indeed doth this sute either to Lions, or to other cruell beasts; but what he spake before figuratiuely, hee heere expounds himselfe plainly; *Thy land is wasted, thy Cities are buried,* or, *raced to the ground.* This (as I haue said) could not haue fallen out, vnlesse Israell had been forsaken of God, & consequently depriued also of his succour & protection.

To amplifie this discourse, he addes, *Also the children of Noph and Tahpanes shall breake thine head.* Wee shall see hereafter that the Israelites were wont to seeke for helpe from the Egyptians: and this particle *yea, or, also,* may be thus expounded: not onely shall those who haue hitherto shewed themselues thy open and deadly foes make warre against thee, but *euen thy confederates;* vpon whose power thou reliedst? *euen these* shall turne their forces against thee, and shall breake thine head, or the crowne of thy head. Some are of opinion that this is spoken by way of reproach; and to shame them, in regard the Egyptians were cowards: ancient histories also testifie that in Egypt men dealt in those affaires, which properly belong

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long to women. But because the Scripture is not wont to testifie thus much, nor to speake in this sense of the Egyptians; I had rather follow that which is most receiued, to wit, that the Egyptians (who notwithstanding they were Israels confederates) should become their enemies: yea that they were their enemies already. By the *top*, or *crowne*, some vnderstand the Princes and heads of Israel: but we may expound it according to our vsuall manner of speaking, *They shall breake, or they shall rub, or chafe thine head:* and this sense in my iudgement sites best.

Now the reason followes, why this came to passe: *Hath not this been done vnto thee?* (saith he) Others translate, Hast not thou done this? in the second person: howsoeuer, the sense is all one. And yet it seemes the opinion of others is better, *Hath not this been done vnto thee, because thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God?* In a word, *Ieremiah* shewes, that the falling away of the people, was the cause of all their chastisements. As if hee should haue said, Such broth as you haue made, euen such sup you off; and know that thou canst not any way charge the Lord as being blame-worthy; for he is ready to performe that which he hath promised, did not thine owne impiety hinder him. Neither hath God indeed chosen thee in vaine; neither hath hee without cause preferred thee before all other nations; onely thou hast reiected and put backe his benefits and liberality from thee. Thus then thy condition had neuer been as now it is, if thy selfe hadst not procured these euils to thy selfe. And how is that? *Because* (saith he) *thou hast forsaken thy God.* And hee doth againe aggrauate the fault in saying, *In the time when hee led thee by the way.*

To leade by the way, is as much as to gouerne rightly and happily. Thus the Prophet shewes that their disloyalty and backsliding was vtterly inexcusable, in that they had reiected the worship and seruice of God: for then things went prosperously forwards. Had they been pres-

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sed with many tentations, they might thus haue made their excuse, wee thought our expectations should haue failed vs, whilest we waited for deliuerance from the true God. Why so? Because hee with-held the signes of his presence from vs; therefore necessity constrained vs: at the least, that which we haue done inconsiderately ought to be pardoned. For what could we thinke else, but that God had forsaken vs? This obiection our Prophet heere preuents, as in the fifth verse of this chapter; *What iniquity haue your fathers found in me?* And in another place, *O my people, what haue I done vnto thee, testifie against me?* Mich. 6. 3. For God in that place is ready to iustifie his cause, and to cleere himselfe of whatsoeuer accusations the people could charge him with. So heere, *I haue led thee by the way:* that is to say, thou wert in good case, being vnder my leading and gouernment; and yet could neither my goodnesse, nor louing kindnesse keepe thee in awe, though I dealt graciously with thee: no though thou knewest thou couldest no way better thine estate, then to be vnder my custody; yet thou louedst rather to follow after idols. What excuse therefore hast thou now? or what shew of excuse canst thou alleage for thy selfe? We see then how the fault of the people is so much the more aggrauated, because they then forsooke their God, when they were no way forced thereunto by any tentation; but being growne meerly disloyall, they voluntarily gaue themselues to the seruice of idols. Now this is confirmed in the verse following.

Vers. 18. *And what hast thou now to doe in the way of Egypt? to drinke the water of Nilus? or what makest thou in the way of Assur? to drinke the water of the riuer?*

THe Prophet (as I touched before) confirmes that which I haue said; namely, that the people could not chalenge the Lord, as being the author of their euils, seeing the whole cause thereof, rested in themselues. And

yet the fault is redoubled, in regard they sought here and there after such remedies which profited them nothing at all: by meanes whereof also they alwayes heaped new iudgements vpon their owne heads. For we must vnderstand that their onely remedy in afflictions was to seeke reconciliation with God. For example, if a sicke man knowes whence the cause of his sickenesse comes, and afterward (in stead of seeking fit remedies) he betakes himselfe to some medecine which shall doe him no good, but will rather be a meanes to encrease the malady; will wee not iudge such an one worthy to perish, seeing hee wittingly & willingly reiected those remedies which would haue done him good, to runne after vaine and deceiueable medecines, thinking to find comfort by them? This is the very thing which *Ieremiah* heere reproues in the Israelites: If thou carefully enquirest (saith he) whence so many afflictions proceed, thou shalt find me guiltlesse, and thine owne iniquities to bee the cause. But what is now to bee done? what course art thou now to take? euen this: bethinke thy selfe well how thou maist bee reconciled with me, and how thou maist obtaine pardon: endeauour to bee reuenged on thy selfe for thy wickednesse. Thus shall thy plagues be soone remoued, and by experience thou shalt find me the best physition, if thou thus addresse thy selfe vnto me.

Simile.

God the best physician.

But what doost thou now? Thou trottest vp and downe, hunting after vaine and deceiueable comforts. *Now thou fleest to Egypt; and by and by to Assyria:* but by none of these meanes canst thou procure vnto thy selfe any benefit. Now wee haue the Prophets meaning: for hauing conuinced the Iewes of their impiety, and hauing so caused them to vnderstand that they could neither ascribe the euils which they endured, to God, nor to Fortune, no nor yet to any other causes: he now shewes, that the onely remedy, and the best way to attain saluation, is to returne into fauour with God. But to runne hither and thither; *now into Egypt, now into Assyria*; they therein discouered

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an euident signe of desperate folly. Now this reprehension depends vpon the holy history. For this people had one while the Assyrians their enemies, another while the Egyptians, in regard there still happened great mutations and changes: and God also laid diuers troubles and afflictions vpon them, the better to awaken them out of their drowsinesse and security. Sometimes he hissed for the Egyptians, as wee shall see afterwards: then hee caused his trumpet to sound into Assyria: and all to certifie the Israelites that no peace was euer to be looked for, till they quietly submitted themselues vnder Gods gouernment. And yet the people reiecting this counsell, were so blinded, that when the Assyrians assailed them, then they fled to Egypt, that is to say, they sought for succour of the Egyptians, and made a league with them. But if any change happened, then they sought and desired to bee confederates with the Assyrians, yea and often to purchase their friendship at a very deare rate.

This is that frensie then, wherewith the Prophet heere taxeth them, when he saith, *What hast thou to doe in the way of Egypt?* that is to say, *I pray thee what good getteste thou by it? what madnesse is it in thee, when thou manifestly feelest that God is against thee, that thou then thinkest not of the right meanes whereby thou mightest procure thine owne welfare; namely, by seeking reconciliation with thy God? All thy health consisteth in fleeing to God, in seeking to get his fauour, and in suing for mercy at his hands. But what course takest thou? Thou runnest to Egypt, thou runnest to Assur. Bringest thou not thy selfe thus into a wofull plight? What childishnesse is it in thee, thus to vexe thy selfe to no purpose?*

From this place let vs learne, that as oft as God corrects vs for our sinnes, it is our parts to seeke for the true remedy, and neuer busie our heads in seeking after those vaine comforts which Satan will present before vs, as so many shiftes to intangle vs: for such allurements shall onely cast vs into a dead sleepe; so as the euils (which otherwise in themselues might be curable) shall become at the last

Doct.

last incurable and deadly. What is to bee done then? As soone as we feele the smart of Gods rods, let vs presently seeke attonement with him, and how we may attaine his fauour; thus shall wee not loose our labour. But if wee stand gazing about vs, we shall be so farre off from attaining reliefe, that wee shall double and treble our sorrowes.

Vse.

To drinke the waters of Nilus, and the waters of Euphrates: is nothing else, but suing for helpe heere and there. I grant hee alludes to the Ambassadours which were sent: because in their trauell, some dranke of the waters of Nilus, and others of the waters of Euphrates: and yet notwithstanding he speakes by way of allegory; as if he should say, God was ready to succour thee, hadst thou but resorted to his mercy, as to a city of refuge: but thou thoughtest it better to neglect him, that thou mightest haue helpe from the *Egyptians*, and *Assyrians*: *Thou seekest then to drinke the waters of farre countries; whilest God supplies thy necessities with sufficiency of waters at home.* It may be also, he alludes to that similitude hee vsed in ver. 13. he there called God the fountaine of liuing waters: as if he should haue said; God would bee to thee an euer-springing fountaine, that can neuer bee drawne dry: neither shouldest thou euer perish for thirst, if thou wouldest content thy selfe with him alone; but thou thirstest after the waters of Nilus and Euphrates. Thus we haue now attained the Prophets meaning. Neither is it to be doubted, but he speakes of the waters *of Nilus and Euphrates*; because both these nations in outward appearance abounded in al sorts of riches, and in multitudes of men. Seeing Israel then relied vpon such defences, the Prophet heere blames their ingratitude, in that they satisfied not themselues with those succours which God afforded them; albeit the same appeared not vnto them in so manifest and visible a sort as the others did. For in God we haue all sufficiency; and if himselfe alone could content vs, certainly hee would giue vs more than wee

An excellent and fruitfull instruction.

could

could wish; and would euer supply all our needes. For himselfe being neuer weary of well doing, hee would bestow vpon vs whatsoeuer our hearts could desire. But because we cannot perceiue this bounty and liberality towards vs with our outward senses, that makes vs runne so greedily after the worlds enticements. Learne wee heuce then, neither *to lust after the waters of Nilus*, nor *Euphrates*: that is to say, *after the deceiueable allurements of this present euill world, which carry in them a faire glosse in outward shew: but let vs rather thirst after this secret and hidden fountaine, which is therefore kept close from our bodily eyes, that wee might seeke it by faith.* Now it followes.

Doct.

Note.

Vers. 19. *Thine owne wickednesse shall correct thee, and thy turnings backe*, or treasons, *shall aske vengeance of thee, and thou shalt know and vnderstand that it is an euill and a bitter thing, that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God, and that my feare is not in thee, saith the Lord God of hosts.*

THe Prophet here againe confirmes that which I haue said before, namely, that the people, will they, nill they, shall in the end feele what it is to reuolt from God: as if he should say, *If hitherto by so many chastisements, thou hast not learned that thy treasons and trecheries are the cause of all these miseries, God will yet adde iudgement vpon iudgement, till at the last thou bee inforced, whether thou wilt or no, to confesse, that thou receiuest the iust reward of thine iniquities.* this is the summe of the verse. But he saith in the first place, *Thy wickednesse shall correct thee*: as if he should say, Albeit God neither ascends into his iudgement seat, nor stretcheth forth his hand to correct thee; yet shall thine iniquities testifie thy iust condemnation, euen in the sight of the Sunne. And this manner of speaking is more forcible, and hath greater vehemency in it, then if the Prophet had onely said, *that God would afflict his people iustly. Thy wickednesse then* (saith he) *shall chastise thee.*

The summe.

Isa. 3. 9. and 59. 12.

The like speech there is also (in a manner) in *Isaiah*, *The triall of their countenance testifies against them*: as if the Lord should say, Though I should sit still, and not take vpon me the office of a Iudge; though no man should giue in euidence against thee; though none should commence any action at all against thee: yet would the guilt of thine owne conscience rise vp against thee, and would put thee to shame and rebuke. So in this place, *Thine owne wickednesse shall correct thee.*

Now wee are to see the reason why the Prophet saith this: for it is most certaine, that hitherto many of the still repined with open mouth against God, as if he had dealt too sharpely and seuerely with them. In regard therefore of these murmurings which euery one was ready euer and anon to vtter forth against God; the Prophet repels such slanders, in telling of them, *that their owne wickednesses were sufficient to correct them. Thy owne wickednesse* (saith he) *shall execute against thee the office of a Iudge in condemning thee.*

Vers. 13. & 17. He saith the same *of their turnings backe*: but he heere better expresseth that which he had said before in generall, of their reuolt from Gods seruice and obedience: therfore here he specifies one kind of wickednes; as if he had said, *We need not now call for thine accuser, or for witnesses; or for a Iudge to pronounce sentence: thy onely turnings backe will suffice (in stead of all these) as sufficient to condemne thee.*

He addes in the next words, *Thou shalt know and proone how euill and bitter a thing it is, to haue forsaken the Lord thy God.* These phrases of speech are somewhat sharpe; but we told you before what they signifie; namely, thy reuolting, or forsaking, that is to say, thy trecherous disloyalties; to wit, *in that thou hast forsaken thy God.*

And that my feare was not vpon, or, *in thee.* The Prophet once againe points out heere the iniquities of this people, as with the finger: for he hath spoken of their straylings, or of their turnings backe: but now hee mentions their

falling

falling away; namely, that the people openly and plainly forsooke the true God. I grant they alwaies retained some forme of religion in the Temple; but all their worship and religion being corrupted with many superstitions: moreouer, faith it selfe being abolished, so as all sincerity and vprightnesse was gone; and thirdly, seeing they mingled the true God with their idols; hee truly affirmes, they had indeed forsaken God, who (as it is said in the Law) is iealous of his honour; and will admit none to be his companions, or equals. Wee haue the Prophets meaning then. It followes. 1 2 3

Exod. 20. 5. and 34. 14.

Thou shalt know how bitter and euill a thing it is: This must be referred to the chastisements; yet he goes on still with that which he said before; namely, that the calamities which the people then endured, came not vpon them by chance, so as being now pressed with so bitter and sharpe afflictions, they were to seeke any cause thereof from farre, in regard all these tedious anguishes, and all the smart which they felt, proceeded meerly from their owne impiety. *By the recompence* then (saith he) *thou shalt know, and thine owne wofull experience shall conuince thee to thy face, that it is an euill and bitter thing, that thou hast reuolted from thy God*: he saith, *from the Lord thy God*, or, To forsake the Lord thy God: for if God had not manifested his fauours to the Israelites, their iniquity had not been so odious: but they hauing proued *God to bee their Father*; and seeing he had dealt so louingly with them, and had done them that honour to establish his couenant with them; therefore their wickednesse was inexcusable.

Afterwards hee changeth the person, *And that my feare was not in thee*. Heere the prophet at length concludes, that the people were growne past feeling, in respect of God, or godlinesse. For by this clause of *the feare of God*; he notes reuerence. Wee know men often fall through errour and ignorance, and otherwhiles are ouertaken through the subtilties of Satan, so as their misery is

to be pitied. But the Prophet heere shewes how this people is so inexcusable, that they are vnworthy any pity or mercy should bee extended to them. Why so? Because (saith he) there is *no feare of God* at all left in thee: that is to say, thou canst not alleage thou wert suddenly ouertaken; neither hast thou any pretext by which thou maist couer thy impiety: thy impudency and shameleſſe behauiour is growne notorious and too apparant; for thou shewest that there is no feare of God in thee.

In the end he addes, *saith the Lord of hosts*: by which words the Prophet addes the greater authority to his doctrine. For we must needs thinke that this so sharpe a censure was very ill taken of the people: and many shooke their heads at it, as their manner was. For we know what an obstinacy the most part were growne to. This is the cause then, why the Prophet heere plainly affirmes that this sentence proceeded not *from himselfe*; *hee was onely charged to publish it*: and forthwith shewes, how *God is the author of it*, so as he vtters nothing *but what the Lord of hosts had enioyned him to speake*.

The Prayer.

Almighty God, seeing it hath pleased thee heretofore to bestow so many benefits vpon vs, hauing once done vs this honour, as to receiue vs into thy fauour: grant we may neuer so forget thy great bounty, that wee should bee carried away by the allurements of the diuell to seeke out forgeries, by which at length we should be brought to ruine and destruction: but that we may continue stedfast and constant vnto the end, that we may daily call vpon thy name, & drinke so large a draught of the fulnesse of thy liberality, that in the meane while wee may study from the heart to serue thee, and to glorifie thy holy name: and by meanes hereof may be able to giue some good testimony that we haue wholly deuoted our selues to thy seruice, vnto which thou hast also most strictly bound vs, when it pleased thee to adopt vs in Iesus Christ. Amen.

LECT.

THE SEVENTH LECTVRE, WHICH IS THE THIRD VPON THE second Chapter.

Vers. 20. *For I haue of old time broken thy yoke, and burst thy bonds, and thou saidst, I will no more serue*, or, I will no more transgresse; for there is a double reading: *but like an harlot as thou art, thou runnest about vpon all high hils, and vnder all greene trees.*

FOr as much as the Hebrew text admits a double reading (because of the affinity which is heere betweene two letters, it causeth some to take it for one verb, & others for another) which is the reason that this place may bee expounded two waies. For if we reade, *I will not passe*, or, *I will not transgresse*, the sense will be, *when I brake thy yoke*; that is to say, when I deliuered thee from the bondage of Egypt, then thou diddest promise me loyalty: for then there was a mutuall contract betweene God and the Israelites: for as God receiued them vnder his protection, to bee (as it were) their patron and support: so they on the other side promised subiection to him. If we receiue this reading, it shall be a complaint; as if God accused the people of their ingratitude and disloyalty. But it seemes the Prophet meant some other thing: and therefore I find the other reading better, *I will not serue*; and yet I approoue not of the interpretation which the expositors bring; neither doubt I but this place hath been corrupted, in regard they vsually allow this interpretation, *I will not serue idols*: and those that haue any meane iudgement will easily consider, that this sense agrees not, but is constrained;

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and therefore it may be (and I thinke it very likely) that the text by this meanes hath been mis-interpreted. For generally all the expositors interpret thus, Thou hast said, I will not serue idols: but this is too constrained. And for my part, I rather thinke that God heere complaines that the people turned that liberty which hee gaue them, into licentiousnesse: which also agrees very well, as wee may easily iudge by the scope of the text. *Because of long time* (saith he) *I haue broken thy yoke, I haue broken thy bands*; therefore thou hast said: (for *vau*, which is heere in the Hebrew, should be resolued into a particle illatiue, Therefore thou saidst) *I will not serue*, that is to say, in stead of giuing thy selfe to mee who had redeemed thee; thou thoughtest thou mightst take liberty to doe what thou wouldest: and the reason which hee yeelds of his speech sutes very well; *For thou ranst vpon euery high mountaine, and vnder euery greene tree; harlot that thou art*. God shewes then, that he hath ill bestowed the grace and benefit of redemption vpon such graceless ones, who thus abused their liberty. For they tooke occasion hereby to ouerflow in all lasciuiousnesse. But if any had rather follow the other reading, I will not gainsay him: and then the sense will be, It is long agoe since I disburthened thee of thy yoke, and brake thy bands: but *thou hast said*, that is, thou didst promise me (for he speaks of this people as of a woman) which is the cause that it is put heere in the feminine gender; as also in regard that God held the place of an husband towards his people; therefore he no sooner accuseth them of disloyalty, but he by and by speakes vnto them as an husband doth to a shameless woman, who hath giuen ouer her selfe to the committing of adultery. *Thou therefore hast said vnto me*, that is to say, thou didst promise me, *that thou wouldest not passe*, that is, that thou wouldest assuredly keepe thy selfe chast, and loyall to me alone. And thus in stead of the particle *ki*, which among the Hebrewes is a note of rendring the cause, we may put in the place of it an aduersatiue,

tiue, to wit, Notwithstanding, it being so taken in other places of the Scriptures. *But*, or, *Notwithstanding then, thou hast runne vpon euery high mountaine, &c.* as harlots are wont to doe, in seeking their maintenance. But (as I haue said) I rather thinke that God complaines heere of his people, in that by the fauour hee shewed them touching their deliuerance, and freeing them from the yoke, they thereby tooke occasion to giue ouer themselues to all dissolute behauiour. For thus the text runnes very well; and all the parts and members thereof concur very fitly one with another.

Whereas the Lord puts them in mind *of breaking their bands; and bursting their yoke*: some referre this onely to the first redemption. But I mislike not of their opinion, who thinke the Prophet speakes of many deliuerances. For we know the Israelites were not for once onely deliuered out of the land of Egypt, but that God euer & anon stretched forth his hand, assoone as they were afflicted and oppressed. *He had long since then taken the peoples yoke from of their neckes*: but it was at sundry times, as we may perceiue by the history of the Iudges. Seeing the peoples liberty then proceeded meerly from Gods free bounty, who had for the fames sake redeemed them; ought they not to haue yeelded themselues obedient to their Redeemer? For the people were therefore set at liberty, that they should wholly dedicate themselues to his seruice.

See Nehem. 9. 28

The end why God redeemes vs.

Thus then God heere accuseth the ingratitude of this people, because they imagined hee thus deliuered them, that they might afterwards resemble wild beasts, as wee shall see hereafter. That wee may the better vnderstand the Prophets meaning then, we must haue an eye to that which Saint *Paul* saith, in Rom. 6. namely, that whilest we serue sinne, wee are freed from Gods righteousnesse. for then we runne after our lusts, and haue no bridle left, to keepe vs in. But after God hath once set vs free from this wofull seruitude vnder sinne; then wee begin to be seruants vnto him and his righteousnesse. And thus being freed

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freed and deliuered from sinne, wee become seruants of righteousnesse: this is the end of our redemption. But many abuse this grace of God, taking occasion thereby to breake foorth into all intemperancy; behauing themselues so inordinatly as if there were no law, nor rule to keepe them within the bounds of holinesse and honesty. This is the cause then why God complaines of the Israelites; *But thou saidst, I will not serue:* for it is too grosse an ingratitude; yea it is too much that thou hast done already, to dreame that I haue not redeemed thee: as also not to vnderstand that my meaning, in vsing thee with such respect, was to teach thee that thou wert wholly mine. For he that is redeemed by another, is no more his owne: God had redeemed this people; and therefore the redemption contained in it an obligation, binding the people ouer, to yeeld voluntary obedience vnto God, and to be gouerned by him. *Thou hast said* then, *I will not serue.* Thus God complaines that he hath ill imployed the benefits and graces which hee bestowed vpon the people: in regard they abused the liberty hee gaue them, to all excesse of riot.

Vse.

1. Cor. 6. 19. 20 *What Condition redemption containes in it.*

And the reason which followes, manifests it yet better; *For thou runnest as an harlot* (saith hee) *vpon euery high mountaine, and vnder euery greene tree.* For we know that the Israelites no sooner reuolted from Gods true worship, but they chose them places here and there; as if the tops of the mountaines, and shadowie places vnder greene trees, had had more holines in thē than any other. And euen thus it fares with the Papists at this day: for their deuotion, that is to say, that diuelish fury which transports them from place to place, is the very same. Oh (say they) such a place is holier, and better than that. So did the Israelites; for they thought themselues nearer heauen, when they *were mounted aloft vpon the tops of the hils:* likewise they thought they had more familiar accesse to God, *when they were below vnder the thicke shade.* And we see also how euery prophane man almost, is

bewitched

bewitched after the same manner. For when they are on the mountaines, they thinke that makes them nearer to God: they also imagine that some diuinity is secretly included, as well by the riuers sides, as vnder greene trees. For as much then as this superstition had long continued among the Israelites, God heere thus reprocheth them, *for their running and wandring to and fro.*

But the similitude which hee vseth must be obserued. For he compares them *to harlots*, who hauing cast off all shamefastnesse, trudge hither and thither, not onely to satisfie their base and filthy lusts; but also their insatiable couetousnesse, which sets them so on gog. He saith then, *Thou rannest about vpon euery mountaine, and vnder euery leaued tree, like an harlot*; or, *harlot that thou art*: as if hee should say, See the reward thou gauest me for my mercy in redeeming thee: thou thinkest thou hast obtained leaue now to ouerflow now in all impiety. Thinke well then what hath occasioned thee thus to prostitute thy selfe to all villany and wickednesse. It followes,

Vers. 21. *And I planted thee as a vine of choyce*; noble, or exquisite: for so much, the Hebrew word signifies, *wholly of faithfull plants*, or approoued seed; *and how art thou then turned vnto me, into the plants of a strange*, or wild *vine.*

GOd here cõfirmes that he said in the former sentẽce: for there he condemned the Israelites, because they ranne riot after their superstitions, notwithstanding God had redeemed them to a better end; namely, that they should suffer themselues to be gouerned by his hand. I (saith he there) *haue planted thee a choyce vine* that is to say, when I redeemed thee from out of thine enemies hands, I licensed thee not to prostitute and giue ouer thy selfe to all abominations. *For I planted thee a vine of choyce.* This similitude is well enough knowne, and wee often meet with it: for God in many places compares his

Church

Church to a vine: generally he tearmes it his heritage, or possession: but in regard the vine is more excellent than all other possessions (for they haue been wont to prefer it before medow ground, or that which is tilled) So then because the vine is the most noble and choyce inheritance; therefore God, to shew how greatly he esteemed his Church; when he mentions it, he giues it rather the name *of a vine*, than of a medow or field. So in this place, *I haue not redeemed thee out of Egypt, euer after to become careless of thee: but my meaning was that thou shouldest take roote and that thou shouldest be to me as a precious inheritance; euen as a vine whose branches are all naturall.* I planted thee then for an excellent vine, to bring me forth fruit: yea (saith he) *for a whole faithfull seed:* that is to say, for this purpose I planted thee, that thou shouldest bring foorth acceptable and pleasant fruit. Yet note by the way, that God hath heere respect, not to the nature of the people of whom he thus speakes; but to his free grace. For the people *naturally* were neuer true and faithfull plants, as it is wel enough knowne: but God shewes, vpon what condition hee redeemed his people; namely, that they should resemble a vine of choyce. *How then?* God speaks heere *by way of admiration*, or as one amazed, to see how corrupt they were; for the indignity of the fact was such, as might haue astonished the whole world.

See Rom. 3. 10. 11. 12. &c.

How is it then, that thou art turned vnto me into the plants of a strange or wild vine? Others turne, into vnprofitable branches: but I know not whence they haue fetched it; and therefore I rest in that which is the most proper, namely, that the vine which should haue been noble and exquisite, was become so degenerate, that it brought forth nothing but wild grapes; as we shall also see in another place. Now he saith that it is growne *wild*, and turned into a *strange vine*: that is, it was no more noble, or of choyce; but that it brought forth nought else *but sowre fruit*: seeing therefore it was profitable for nothing, it is not without cause that God stiles it *a strange vine*. It followes.

Vers. 22.

Vers. 22. *Though thou shouldest wash thee with niter*, or allom, as some translate it, *and that thou shouldest gather together all the grasse of the fuller*, as some expound it; others translate it sope: as touching the substance, the matter is not great, because God meant to giue them to vnderstand, that no art, nor any other meanes at all, nor that any grasse or herbs were able to cleanse out the filthinesses of the people: *thine iniquity is marked*, graued, or printed; or as some translate, sealed, *before my face, saith the Lord God.*

WE haue seene already (and the Prophet will also often mention the same) how the people were become so rebellious, that they would receiue no correction. For the greater part were growne audacious, and become so hardened in their sinnes, that they made no bones at all, scornfully to make their replies against the Prophets, when they pressed them home indeed. What? Are not we Gods holy people? Hath he not chosen and adopted vs? Are not we the sacred of-spring of *Abraham*? For this cause the Prophets were faine to carry themselues on this manner towards them: for (as wee haue it in our common prouerbe) to a rough horse belongs a rough rider: the Israelites therefore being like to tough and knobby timber, needed to be laid vpon with maine strokes, to master their tough and crabbed nature. According to which *Ieremiah* now saith, *Though thou wash thee with sope, and though thou gettest to thee all store of fullers grasse; yet is thine iniquity sealed before me*: that is to say, thou shalt get nothing by colouring ouer thy wickednesses by goodly pretences: *wash thee* as much as thou wilt, yet thine iniquity remaines sealed vp in my sight. Now the Prophet speakes in the *person of God*, that the sentence of condemnation, which hee pronounceth vpon the Israelites, by which also he brings all their goodly flatteries and faire pretexts to nothing, might

might haue the more waight and efficacy, as hath been said. They vsed *allome*, and fullers grasse, to cleanse and take out spots in clothes: and that is the reason why the Hebrew word *Borith*, heere vsed, is often attributed to fullers. But there is no great necessity for vs to dispute whether it were an herbe, or powder, or some such like thing: for as touching the substance, it agrees very well. The Prophet vnder a similitude meant to shew, that hypocrites gaine nothing by alleaging their smooth excuses for their defences, when God reprooues them. He saith then, that all their labour will be vtterly lost. And why so? *Because their iniquity was sealed:* that is, in regard they could neuer so wash themselues, that that which was sealed, or had receiued a stampe vpon it, could be defaced. *Spots* indeed may be gotten out by sope, or some other herbs; but after the spots be once soaked in, or that the stampe hath entred within the thing *stamped* or *sealed*, all the washings in the world will profit nothing; because such markes are so *ingrauen*, that a more extraordinary remedy must bee vsed, to effect the same withall. So the Prophet here saith, *that the spots are ingrauen*; and therefore cannot be gotten out, nor abolished, neither *by sope*, nor any other herbe.

And he saith that these spots are sealed, *in Gods presence*, or, *before his face*; in regard it was a very easie matter for the Israelites to make their excuses, and to lay all the blame vpon some other: yea they were growne to such an impudency, that they durst openly resist the Prophets; as if they had offered them great wrong: also they stucke not to tearme the Prophets, railers, and slanderers. This is the reason why he saith, *thine iniquity is marked before me:* that is to say, albeit thou deceiuest thine owne soule with flatteries, and hidest thine iniquities from men; yet that shall nothing profit thee. Why so? Because the same *rests sealed before me*. It followes.

Vers. 23.

Vers. 23. *How wilt thou say*, that is, How saist thou: for the Hebrewes often vse the future tence, to signifie a continuall action; How saist thou then, *I am not polluted, I haue not walked after Baalims? Behold thy waies in the valley, acknowledge that thou hast been a swift Dromedarie, which runneth by his mayes.*

Ieremiah here prosecutes his former sharpe reprehension of the Israelites, & discouers all the close conueyances of hypocrites, vnder which they thinke to steale away in the darke. For after hypocrites haue alleaged their false and fained pretexts, they thinke the Lord is so hoodwinked, that hee can no more espie ought in them, and that none can euer reproue or iudge them againe. Therfore the Prophet thus seuerely reprehends this so sottish a security, saying, *How dareſt thou boast thou art not polluted? How dareſt thou affirme, thou hast not followed Baalims?* that is to say, *after straunge gods.* For as touching this word *Baalims*, I told you it signifies, petty, or little Gods. The Iewes knew well enough indeed, that there was but one high and soueraigne God; and yet notwithstanding that, they sought out aduocates: and hence hath sprung those multitudes of gods which they haue been wont to forge. For men (as yet) neuer fell so foully into such a folly, but they alwaies confessed there was a supreame maiesty, or rather a diuine nature: but therewith they mingled petty gods; so as the *Baalims* were (after a sort) their aduocates, as the Papists call their saints, in regard they dare not attribute the names of Gods to the idols which they haue framed: and such cauils (for all the world) vsed the Iewes. He saith therefore, *What excuse canst thou make, that thou hast not followed after Baalims?* See vers. 8.

Behold (saith he) *thy wayes; consider what thou hast done in the valley; and at length acknowledge that thou hast behaued thy selfe like a swift Dromedarie.* For the Prophet

seemes to want words enough to set foorth such violent furies, as at that time raigned among the people, vnlesse he compared them to *Dromedaries*. But for as much as he speakes vnto them in the feminine gender, as vnto a woman; therefore hee puts the *female* Dromedary heere. Now I thinke he calles her *swift*, not onely because she ranne swiftly; but because shee is violently carried with heat of lust, as we shall see afterwards. This place then giues vs to vnderstand, that the people were so hardened in their euill courses, that they impudently reiected the reprehensions of the Prophets. Their impiety was apparant enough: yet were they not ashamed to make their defences, as if the Prophets had wronged them ouermuch, in condemning their follies: neither are we greatly to maruell at such an obstinacy in the ancient Iewes; seeing the Papists are no lesse headstrong at this day, in contradicting the known and manifest truth. For albeit children are now able to discerne of their grosse and shamelesse idolatries; yet they thinke with one word to excuse all, when they answere vs, that pictures and images are no idols: the Israelites indeed (say they) were condemned for forging images and puppets; but that was in regard they were inclined to superstition. And thereupon they cry out against vs with open mouth, that wee wickedly slander this way of seruing God, which hath been receiued and vsed of them. We see, and little babes also (after a sort) may perceiue, that there is no kind of superstition, which is not receiued, and which hath not full sway in the papacie; and yet will they needs be held sincere and innocent, as if in nothing they were blame-worthy. And thus were they wont to doe in times past. Now because the Temple then stood, wherin also they offered sacrifices (and therefore had some shew of religion) as oft as the Prophets reproued their wicked corruptions which were mingled therewith (which also marred the worship of God, and were (as they ordinarily speake) so many whoredomes and adulteries) they would obiect: What?

Doe we not worship God? This rebellion then is it which the Prophet here goes about to subdue, *How dareſt thou affirme*, or say, *I am not polluted?* As the papists yet speak, Beleeue we not in the true God? Faine we multiplicities of gods? But in the meane while they rob God of his whole power, and rend it into I know not how many pieces: and yet they blush not with their more than harlots brasen and shamelesse fore-heads, to affirme, that they worship but one God. Euen so did the Iewes. But our Prophet heere conuinceth their sottish and vaine brags. *Consider* (saith he) *thy waies in the valley; see what thou hast done, thou swift Dromedary.* For in regard they were growne so obstinate, that they would not beeuer come with reason; therefore he compares them to *brute beasts. You are* (saith he) *growne like the lustfull Dromedaries, who are so violently carried away therewith, that they loose the remembrance of all things, after they are once bent to follow their waies.*

Verſ. 24. *The wild Asse which is vsed to the wildernesse, who according to the appetite of her soule, snuffeth vp the wind by occasion, who can keepe her backe? All they that seeke her will not wearie themselues, they will find her in her moneth.*

AS *Ieremiah* likened the people before to a Dromedary; so heere he compares them *to a wild Asse. Thou art* (saith he) *a Dromedarie, and a wild Asse.* For if the wild Asse *gathereth in, or snuffeth vp the wind, according to the desire of her soule:* that is to say, if with full breath she desireth, and gathereth in the wind by her occasion, or by her meeting at a venture (for hereby he meant to let vs know, that in such kind of beasts there is neither discretion, nor any moderation at all.) after then they haue gotten the wind in their snout, on which side soeuer they meete therewith; none can stay them, nor keepe them backe from pursuing their violent course. For whosoeuer

would bestow his labour to that end, should but labor in vain; vntill the time come in which he may find her in her moneth. By these words then, the Prophet giues vs to vnderstand, that the peoples fury was become altogether vntameable, so as it was not possible to hold them in, by any meanes whatsoeuer; no more than the wild Asse can be restrained, or forget that naturall restlesnesse which is in her; but especially after she hath once scented the wind. Indeed if she were shut vp, peraduenture the crib might somewhat preuaile with her, from flinging thus furiously ouer the fields: but if she may freely take her course, ouer mountaines, and through thickets, where she may gather and take in the wind, according to her soules desire; that is to say, after she may fetch her frisks to and fro, without any hinderance: this is the *wind of occasion*. For the Prophet calles that *the wind of occasion*, which falles out by chance: as if hee should say, such beasts are ruled by no reason, neither keepe they any measure. If any one of vs would vndertake a iourney, hee would first enquire how farre hee could trauell on a day; for we not onely flee wearinesse, but (as much as in vs lies) we preuent it: moreouer, hauing considered in himselfe what way to take, he aduiseth with his host; and not content with that, he requires instructions touching that way which is most direct. But the case is otherwise *with wild beasts*, when they take their course: for after they haue once *set vpon it*, they neither direct their race towards *Lyons*, nor *Lawsan*, but fling vp and downe according as the toy takes them in the head: and their strength being well spent, yet cease they not still to hold on their course: for they take their lust for a law. Now we haue the Prophets meaning.

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Cities in France.

He saith, *Who can stay her?* As if he should say, the people cannot be restrained, nor brought back to any meane. Why so? because all their senses are fore-stalled with this fury, or rage rather.

It followes, *No man will wearie himselfe; shee will at the last*

last be found in her moneth. All the expositors agree in this, that *her moneth* is heere taken for the time in which shee is ready to foale; as if he should say, After the wild Asses be once big, and that their foaling time approacheth, then are they constrained to be quiet, by reason of their heauie burthen; and then it is no masterie to take them, because they want that agility of body which they had at the first, for they carry their young ones in their belly. And thus the Prophet shewes *how the people resembles wild Asses*, in regard no instruction whatsoeuer could either keepe them in, or moderate their intemperancie: onely *the time of their bringing forth must be obserued.* Now we are to see how this similitude is to be applied to this people. This verse containes two parts: the first whereof (as I haue said) shewes, that the people could not possibly be bowed by any wholsome admonitions, neither would they obey good counsell; but were transported *with inraged lust, as with the wind of occasion,* or as with the wind which is first met withall. Now there being such an obstinacy in them, *God heere threatens the hypocrites to come in such a time wherein they shall be tame enough:* and that he will still these their violent courses. How? *The time of trauell will approach:* that is to say, *when at the length you shall haue conceiued many iniquities, the burthen thereof will stop you.* Now he signifies *the time of his iudgement:* as if he should say, You must not be handled like men that are in their wits, or of sound iudgement; for you are *wild beasts,* that cannot be tamed. What remaines then? Euen as the wild Asse is burthened with the waight which she beares in her belly, when the time of her foaling comes: *so in the end* (saith he) *will I cause you to feele the waight of your iniquities, which will proeue too heauie for you to beare; and indeed will ouerwhelme you.* And yet if so be your obstinacy be such, that it can no way be reclaimed; my hand notwithstanding shall bee sufficient to curbe you. For seeing you will not bow, nor submit your selues to my doctrine, I will crush you to pieces. Now then, we haue

Application of this similitude to the Iewes.

Two parts of this verse.

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haue the scope of this similitude, as also how it ought to be applied to this people: and lastly, what profit we may make of it, that liue in these times. We will reserue the rest for to morrow.

The Prayer.

Almighty God, seeing it hath pleased thee to deliuer vs from vnder the tyranny and power of Satan, to subiect vs vnder thy yoke; gouerne vs also we pray thee, by the spirit of teachablenesse, obedience, and meekenesse, so as wee may willingly submit our selues, all our liues long, vnto thee; and that from vs thou maist reape that fruit which thee haue receiued from thee by our redemption; and in such wise may renounce our sinnes, that notwithstanding the same; wee may wholly apply our minds to serue and please thee, as seruants of righteousnesse; till at the length hauing finished the good fight of faith, wee may bee gathered into that happy rest, which is purchased for vs by the blood of thy only Sonne. Amen.

THE EIGHTH LECTVRE, WHICH IS THE FOVRTH VPON THE second Chapter.

Vers. 25. *Keepe thy foot from being vnshod*, that is, put not off thy shooes, *and thy throat from thirst; but thou saidst desperately, no: I haue loued strangers, and them will I follow.*

THis sentence of the Prophet is so concise and short, that the breuity of it, at the first blush, makes it seeme difficult: but obserue in a word, that hee meant to say, it was impossible in any sort to correct this wild people, albeit God vsed all the meanes hee could, by his seruants the Prophets, to appease such a furious rage wherewith

wherewith they were carried away after their superstitions, and idols. God therefore in this first member shewes what course he tooke with them: for all *the exhortations and sermons of the Prophets*, tended to no other end, *but to keepe the people quiet vnder Gods gracious protection*. But he vseth other termes: *Keepe backe thy foot* (saith he) *from being vnshod, and thy throat from thirst*. For as soone as they perceiued any danger towards, they ranne now into Egypt, then into Assyria, as wee haue seene before. God heere complaines of this folly, in that they obeyed not the counsell he gaue them, which was for their benefit and saluation. For if God had commanded them to haue fled towards the East, or West: their replies would haue been ready, The way is too long and tedious for vs: but God onely willed them to keepe them quiet and still at home: what a fury was it then in them not to wait patiently for his succour, but to vexe themselues, and that for nothing? *Isaiah* saith in a manner as much; but not in the very same words. For hee expostulates the matter with them, that they refused no trauell, albeit they might haue been sustained by Gods immediate hand, without fetching such vagaries. We now haue the Prophets meaning. For in the first place he shewes, that the people were timely admonished; but they were so farre fore-stalled with their peruerse counsels, that they would giue the Prophets no audience. This therefore was a vile ingratitude, *in that they would not stay at home quietly*, but rather chose to take any paines whatsoeuer, though it were vtterly fruitlesse, *This is your rest* (saith Isa.30.15.) *but you would not*. Who desires not peace, and to be at rest? All men will confesse, it is one of the greatest benefits that can naturally be wished or desired: and yet the Prophet heere affirmes, the people esteemed it not. It must needs thereupon follow then, that they were become vtterly senseleſse, in neglecting that, which euery man naturally desires; which also is ingrauen (as it were) in euery mans breast. But the Prophet not onely thus teacheth the people, but hee (after a

See Vers.18.

Isa.30.5.7.

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sort) puts them also in mind of that which was spoken before, by *Isaiah*, *Micah*, and the rest of the Prophets. 2 For God had often exhorted them *to be still*: and therfore the Prophet now enueyes against their ingratitude, in that they suffered themselues to be so transported and carried away by their vnruly passions: which was the cause they reiected so singular a fauour and benefit, as God then offered them. Let vs obserue then, that the Prophet repeats that, which the other Prophets had taught before.

Keep backe thy foot (saith he) *from being vnshod*: that is, put not off thy shooes. Others translate, *from nakednesse*, because in long iourneys they wore out their shooes. But for mine owne part, I rather thinke it ought to be referred to their ordinary custome, because they were wont to walke bare-foot. *Keepe thy foot then from being vnshod, and thy throat from thirst*: we all know that drought is a thing which molests men much. Thus then the Prophet heere corrects the peoples folly, for suffering themselues to be so violently ouercarried with their wicked lusts, that they *procured thirst to themselues by their long iourneys*. In regard then, that God required nothing of them but to spare their paines, their fault is redoubled, in that they refused to follow such wholesome counsell and aduice. For (as I said before) if God had required ought of them that might hardly haue beene performed, they might haue had some shew of excuse: but seeing hee demanded nothing of them, but to rest patiently and meekly in tranquility at home, they were able to say nothing for themselues; and therefore he saith, *thou saidst desperately, no.* Here the Prophet shewes how the people on the contrary were *rebellious* and headstrong, in that they proudly scorned such sweet and amiable admonitions. In the first place, they say, *there is no hope*: the verbe in Hebrew signifies to be desperate; and thereupon they say, *It is a thing desperate*; vnlesse any had rather translate, It is a wearisome thing: which sense agrees not ill: as if they should say, I am but too much vexed in vaine, so as my

wearinesse

wearineſſe aduertiſeth me to ſit ſtill.

No. The Prophet ſpeakes conciſely, the better to expreſſe the ſtubborne behauiour of this people; in ſaying, *the thing is deſperate*: it is all one as if they had caſt all admonitions and exhortations farre away from them: he afterwards adds; he will doe nothing. There is no verbe in the Hebrew: but this cutted manner of ſpeech hath more efficacy in it (as I haue ſaid) and doth more fully ſet forth the peoples pride and rebellion. *Iſaiah* on the contrary complaines of them, in chap. 57. 10. for not ſaying, *It is done, there is no more hope*: and thus it ſeemes that *Iſaiah* and *Ieremiah* ſhould contradict one another: for *Ieremiah* heere reprooues the people for ſaying, *there is no hope*; and *Iſaiah*, *becauſe they ſaid it not*. But the Iewes in anſwering here thus cuttedly, The thing is deſperate; meant to ſay, the Prophets doe but looſe their labour, in regard they purpoſed to proſecute that which they had taken in hand, to the vttermoſt. Theſe words therefore, *the thing is deſperate*, ſhewes what a deſperate rebellion there was in the people: for they giue vs to vnderſtand, that they could neuer be reclaimed; and therfore plainly, and without many circumlocutions auouch, The thing is deſperate. But *Iſaiah* reprooues the people, becauſe they ſaid not, There is no hope: that is, in regard that by long experience, their folly was not conuinced. For having often trotted downe into Egypt, and then into Aſſyria, God gaue them to vnderſtand, by their owne experience, how vnaduiſed they were. They might well haue concluded then by the things they had ſeene, that God diſappointed them of their hope, to bring them to a change of their purpoſes. *Iſaiah* therefore rightly ſaith, that the Iewes were growne too ſottiſh, becauſe they neuer ceaſed to follow their blind obſtinacy; and yet perceiued not that God (as you would ſay) had ſet barres and obſtacles in their way, thereby cauſing them to change their courſe, to recoyle backe, and to forſake thoſe vaine hopes wherwith they had been ſeduced. Now wee ſee then what a

Obiect. Anſw.

How Ieremiah and Iſaiah may be reconciled touching their diuers manner of ſpeaking.

good

good agreement there is betweene these two Prophets; albeit their manners of speaking bee diuers. *Ieremiah* brings in the Iewes heere speaking thus cuttedly, to set forth their obstinacy; *There is no hope*: that is to say, O ye Prophets, ye cease not still to dull our eares with your admonitions, but it is to no purpose: for wee are resolued what to doe, neither can any euer bee able to reclaime vs. *Isaiah*, he accuseth the peoples madnesse; in that albeit they had oft been deceiued, both by the Assyrians, and Egyptians; yet they knew not that such experiences were to bring them home into the right way, and that they were too headstrong in following their wicked enterprises.

As touching this place which now we handle, we see what the Prophet meant to say; to wit, that God louing and graciously exhorted the Iewes, with quiet mindes to rest themselues content with his succour: and yet they were not onely stubbornly rebellious, but with haughty and proud spirits reiected this fauour, which God vouchsafed to tender vnto them.

Now it followes: *For I haue loued strangers, and them will I follow.* He amplifies the peoples fault, in regard they were giuen to follow strange gods. Hee also still continues on the same similitude which we mentioned before. For as God on his part, had taken this people into his safeguard; so were they also bound in such sort vnto him, that it was now become an holy and sacred band and vnion betweene God and them: euen like to that wherewith the wife is bound to her husband, by the band of marriage. *Ieremiah* then in this place prosecutes this similitude, and saith, *the Church was become like a shamelesse and wicked strumpet, in regard shee would not vouchsafe to giue eare to her husbands admonitions, albeit hee endeauoured thereby to seeke reconciliation with her.* But if a wife should deale thus with her husband, in reiecting his counsell, being ready to returne into fauour with her, and to passe by all her former offences; were she not become

vtterly

vtterly desperate? Thus the Prophet then shewes how this people were growne to such a wofull and incurable impiety, that they stopped their eares, whilest God so graciously and gently called them to repentance: and withall, hauing browes of brasse, proudly vaunted, *that as they had loued idols, so them would they follow:* albeit therein they reiected the onely true God. It followes.

Vers. 26. *As the thiefe is ashamed when he is found, so is the house of Israel made ashamed: their Kings, their Princes, their Priests, and their Prophets.*

OThers translate it, in the future tence, *so shall they bee confounded:* and their opinion is, that the Prophet heere mentions the punishment which was now at hand to be inflicted vpon the people. But I rather expound the words simply as they sound; namely, their impiety is now become so odious, that there needs not much rhetorick to discipher it out; because it was already growne so palpable, that a man might feele it (as it were) with his finger. The Prophet then compares the Iewes *to theeues* which are taken with the manner: as if he should say, the hypocrites that are mingled amongst this people, gaine little by their cauils and euasions. Why so? *Because their* impiety is apparant to all the world: euen as a theefe who being taken with the manner, can neither denie, nor couer the fact. His meaning is then, that they are so surprised (as it were) with the deed doing; that is, their wickednesses are so notorious, that whatsoeuer they alleage to the contrary, they shall neuer bee able to excuse themselues, but their villany will manifest it selfe to the sight of all men. Wee haue now the Prophets meaning then. Before we haue seene how the people by many friuolous euasions haue sought to excuse themselues: but here *Ieremiah* shewes, that all their pretexts are so farre off from procuring them any excuse, that on the contrary, their impudency is thereby so much the more discouered,

See chap. 5. 26.

The Iewes compared to theeues surprized with the deed doing.

uered, whileſt all the world euidently perceiues their wickedneſſe; which is ſo manifeſt, that they can by no deuices ſo colour it, but it will cleerly bee viewed of all men.

Neither ſpeakes he heere of the common ſort only, but he accuſeth the *Kings, Princes, Prieſt* and *Prophets*: as if he ſhould ſay, euen all, from the higheſt to the loweſt of them, are ſo corrupted, that without any bluſhing at all, they declared and ſhewed themſelues wicked and open contemners of God, in following their inuentions, and ſuperſtitions. And yet notwithſtanding the Iewes no doubt laboured by all meanes to vphold their owne credits: but God heere diſcouers all their iuglings and deceits, whereunder they thought to couer and hide their impieties. For in plaine *Engliſh*, hee ſaith, they are *very theeues*, and ſuch as are *euen taken with the manner*, as they ſay. And yet there is no contrariety as touching the ſenſe, though the Prophet ſaith, that the Iewes before ſpake otherwiſe; and now deciphers out, and blazeth their impudency. The Iewes denied they were either Apoſtataes or diſloyall: no, they had not ſo much as forſaken the worſhip of God; this they denied in words: but when the Prophet now brings their villany to light, their replies are well qualified: for they had their fallacies, as we ſaid before. But the Prophet hath already been ſo plaine with them, in telling them they haue wickedly and with a high hand reſiſted God, that now their deſperate malice and obſtinacy is diſcouered to the full. Now it followes.

Verſ. 27. *Saying to a tree, thou art my father, and to a ſtone thou haſt begotten me*, or, as it is diuerſly written, Thou haſt begotten vs: *for they haue turned away the neck*: or as others turne it, the backe, or the backe parts, *and not the face; yet in the time of affliction, they will ſay*, that is, they ſay, *Ariſe, and helpe vs.*

28 *And where are thy gods whom thou haſt made: let them*

them arise, and see whether they can saue thee in the day of thy distresse: for according to the number of thy Cities, so are thy gods.

HEre the Prophet confirmes that which hee said before, touching the obstinacy of the people in their wicked courses. He shewes then it is not without cause, he affirmed that their sinnes were growne too apparant, and that it was impossible for them to excuse themselues by any of their euasions. *For to a tree they said* (saith hee) *thou art my father, &c.* By these words the Prophet would giue them to vnderstand, that idolatry was so rooted in their hearts, that they stucke not to giue that honor which belongs to the liuing God, to their puppets, whether *of wood, or stone.* But the Prophet in the meane while notes that heere, which is the most detestable in idolatry; namely, *when that honour which is due to God, is giuen to images; not onely touching that which appeares in outward show, to wit, in kneeling or bowing before them, but when they call vpon them,* and that, *to obtaine helpe and deliuerance from them.* This then is diligently to be obserued: for the Papists when they bow before their images and pictures, if you presse them throughly with it, they will notwithstanding neuer yeeld that there is any idolatry in this. For in their language they haue gotten a distinction, namely, that they worship not their images with the honour of *Latria*, but onely with that of *Doulia*; which signifies seruitude, or seruice. And thus they thinke they haue very well quit themselues. But albeit wee should grant them all they say, yet can they not for all that deny, but they both pray, and direct their vowes vnto their images. Seeing then *they seeke deliuerance at their hands*, whatsoeuer they cauill to the contrary, it is meerly vaine and friuolous. For the Prophets condemne not these outward gestures: as the bowing of the knee, or other kinds of ceremonies and rites, when they accuse idolaters in their sermons. What then? namely, because *they say to the images,*

The Papists distinction of Latria and Doulia.

See Calu. Institut. lib. 1. cap. 11. sect. 11.

Images, Thou art my father: that is to say, they fixe the power of God, to images of wood and stone. It is very sure the Iewes neuer became so brutish, as to say in expresse tearmes, *that gods of wood and stone were their fathers:* neither did they euer vtter any such words: and yet our Prophet belies them not, although he attributes this language vnto them. But as it is euident from other places, the Prophets note not the speech, but the intention. For when the Iewes bowed before images, they did (for all the world) as we see the Papists doe at this day. They affirmed indeed that they worshipped one God onely, and it was to him they came for deliuerance: but in the meane while (by your leaue) they thought Gods power was included in those images. And this is the reason why they say, *Thou art my father, thou hast begotten me.* So our Papists likewise, if any of them fall downe before the image of Saint *Katharine*, Saint *Christopher*, he will say, *Our father*; but to excuse the matter, Oh (saith he) it is in the honour of God: and yet like a foole thou troteest first to this image, and then to that, and wilt patter ouer thy *Pater noster*. Neither is it to bee doubted, but the idolatry now vsed in the Papacy, is more grosse, and lesse excusable, than that which was then among the Iewes. But although we should speake nothing of the Papists pattering ouer their *Pater noster* thus, before the first image they meet withall: yet it is a thing without question, that in offering their vowes and prayers to their images, they inclose Gods power within them, as if it were fixed thereunto. We must therefore obserue, that the Iewes are not onely condemned for censing or sacrificing to their idols; but for attributing the glory of God to senseless stockes, and in seeking for deliuerance from them. Now because this was not done in expresse words, the Prophet notes heere their peruerse affections; in regard they raised not vp their minds and senses on high vnto God; but thus doted vpon their images. It followes,

The Prophets often in their sermons aime not so much at the speeches of idolaters, as at their intent.

Thy turned their * *necke vnto me, and not the face.* God heere

* or, backe.

heere againe by these words, confirmes that which hee said before; namely, that their Apostasie and disloyalty was so manifest and notorious, that it could not bee couered by any of their disguisings. In the next words hee addes, *neuertheless* (for the copulatiue *and*, ought to bee resolued into an aduersatiue *notwithstanding*) *in the day of their distresse they will say, Arise and saue vs.* Heere God complaines that the Iewes doe too maliciously abuse his bounty, to wit, that in the time of their greatest distresse, they ran to him. But (saith he) what haue I to doe with you? you are wholly addicted to your idols, *you call them your fathers*; and to them you attribute the praise and glory of your deliuerance; which you doe indeed, whilest your affaires prosper well: but if your idols once faile you at your need, *then you turne to me saying, arise thou and saue vs.* But your idols are your fathers, and from them you expect your safety: therefore now I haue nought to doe with you: euen satisfie your selues with your idols still, and trouble me no more, seeing you haue reiected me. This is the reason why in the next verse he adds, *Where are thy gods?* God heere scornes that vaine confidence which deceiued the Iewes; *Where are thy gods whom thou hast forged? Let them arise, and let vs see what helpe they will afford thee, in the time of thy affliction.* Wee haue now the Prophets meaning. For hee shewes how the people tooke a wrong course, in seeking to their idols in prosperity; and in the meane while would haue God tied to them, who yet forlooke the true God, in cleauing to those idols. Therefore he saith, they were to looke for no helpe from the true God, because they had robbed him of his power, by framing idols to themselues. For we must still remember what hee said before; namely, that the people held the false gods for their fathers, and that they were the cause of their deliuerance. And it is certaine, that our Papists at this day tread euen in the very same steps. For they haue their patrons and aduocates: but when they see all their fond superstitions to profit them

Vers. 18.

Vers. 27.

them nothing, then they would haue God at their becke: then he must helpe at a pinch. But in the meane while, what reuerue they vnto him? For after they haue depriued him of all the parts of his honour and glory, to diuide it as a prey among the Saints; yet then would they haue God to arise and helpe them. But wee see what answere God makes to such, *Where are thy gods?*

Vse.

To the end we may benefit our selues then, by this doctrine; we must take heed we tarry not till wee be constrained to know and feele the smart by experience, euen when things are at the lowest ebbe, then to see that wee haue lost our time and our labour, in hoping for succour, and in suing to idols: but rather let vs know, that it is our duties to come directly vnto God, at the very first encounter, that so in our greatest needs and necessities wee may indeed find him ready to helpe and assist vs. God yet further amplifies this gauling of them; that is, that taunting manner of speech which he vsed before saying, *Where are thy gods? Let them now arise and helpe thee:* as if he should say, let them prooue if they can yeeld thee any succour.

It is always best in our greatest straits, to sue vnto God for his helpe first.

When he saith, *Thou hast as many gods as Cities:* the meaning is, *because the people contented not themselues with one God; euery City chose vnto it selfe a seuerall god. Seeing the case so stands them, that infinite gods are called vpon among you; wherefore come they not now to your succour?* We see then that God heere bitterly taunts the diffidence of this people, for not resting satisfied *with one God*, but that they would needs seeke out other gods, and that *without number*, vers. 32. There were many Cities in Iudeah, and yet had so many patrons and aduocates. *One God* might well haue sufficed, and would haue manifested his help in sauing them, as oft as they needed. But this one God they despised; and euery City framed vnto it selfe sundry gods. *Let them come then* (saith hee) and seeing you trust in this *multitude*; let them rise now and helpe you: for I that am but one, you contemne, because I am alone.

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Vers. 29. *Wherefore plead you with me? you haue all rebelled against me saith the Lord.*

IEremiah heere concludes the former doctrine: for he saith, the Iewes shall gaine nothing by alleaging their innocency against God; as if by this their tattle they could escape his iudgement: neither yet did this satisfie them, but they were growne to such impudency, so to chalenge God himselfe, as if he were blame-worthy. But God in one word answeres, *You are trecherous and disloyall.* The summe then is, that the Iewes are not well aduised, in hardening their harts thus in an obstinate course. Why so? Because God holds them already *conuicted*, so as they shall but loose their labours, in alleaging this or that for their excuse. This place then is worthy our obseruation: for wee know how all of vs naturally are enclined vnto hypocrisie; and that God no sooner calles vs to an account, but scarce the hundreth man will acknowledge his fault in humbling himselfe, and in suing for pardon: but the greater part will storme; yea all (in a manner) will not sticke euen to rise vp against God himselfe. And more than that, they will set vp their bristles, not fearing to prouoke God to his face, euen with an high hand. Since hypocrisie then thus beares sway in vs, and that it is so deeply rooted in our hearts: seeing also this hypocrisie *begets impudency* and rebellion against God; let vs carefully remember what the Prophet heere saith; namely, that all such *as plead against him*, shall profit nothing by all their excuses: for in the end he will lay their disloyalty and trechery open. It followes.

I Vers. 30.

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I Vers. 30.

Vers. 30. *I haue smitten your children in vaine, they receiued no correction; your sword hath deuoured your Prophets, like a destroying Lyon.*

SOme expound the beginning of this verse, as if God chastised the Iewes for their vanity, in regard they were all accustomed to lying: but the second part of the verse answeres not to this. Wherefore it is certaine, *that God complaines heere of the Iewes, because that whilest hee laboured to bring them into the right way, they grew altogether incorrigible*: and we also haue the like sentence in the first chapter of *Isaiah*, vers. 6. I haue lost all my labour (saith the Lord there) in chastening you; no part in you is free, no not from the crowne of the head, to the sole of the foot. In which place God testifies that he tried all the remedies he could: but he found the Iewes of such a stubborne and rebellious nature, that they were vtterly incurable. *Ieremiah* heere handles the same argument: and God by this meanes so much the more aggrauates the peoples vntowardnesse and stubbornesse: thereby giuing them to vnderstand, that hee not onely laboured by *words*, to see whether the Iewes would receiue any admonition: but also by *chastisements and corrections*: and yet in both these, that hee spent his labour in vaine. Before, he spake concerning *instruction*, when hee said, *keepe thy foot from being vnshod, and thy throat from thirst.* Thus then the Prophet by Gods commandement had aduertised them, that they should be still: but all these admonitions were fruitlesse and vnprofitable. Now hee addes, that he yet tried a second meanes, to see if *corrections* would make them wise; but they also profited by them as little, as by the former. *I haue chastised you then in vaine* (saith he) *because you haue receiued no correction.* But he speakes of *children*, to shew that the whole body of the people was corrupt. For albeit lusts are more hot and boyling in youth, than in aged persons, yet is there not

1 See vers. 25. Isa. 30. 7. 10. 15.

2 *A desperate case is that people come vnto, when neither words nor blowes will amend them.*

not such a rebellion and stif-neckednesse in them, as in those that are stricken in yeeres. Hardly is that disease cured that is rooted in the bones. When one hath been accustomed all his life to despise God, it is a thing almost impossible euer to cure such an one of that sicknesse, especially if he be once hardened in it: for then a man hath made himselfe vnfit to receiue *either admonition, or correction.* For age of it selfe is very wayward and testie; yea, they thinke great wrong is offered them, if they bee reproued. But where there is such audaciousnesse and stubbornesse *in youth*, that they will no more be corrected, nor receiue any reprehension; that is more prodigious and strange. The Prophet then shewes that there was no sincerity nor vprightnesse at all in this people, seeing their *children* reiected all discipline. Now we haue the Prophets meaning; to wit, that God had sent his Prophets in vaine; and therefore hee now shewes that the people not onely wanted eares to heare those holy doctrines which were deliuered vnto them; but had also stiffe neckes which would not bow, *although he corrected them seuerely*: so as that way also hee gained nothing at their hands. It followes, *Your sword hath deuoured your Prophets.* But I cannot finish this now. Let vs pray.

Almighty God, seeing it pleaseth thee by thy fatherly bounty to call vs daily vnto thee, giue vs grace we may not harden our hearts against thy holy and wholsome admonitions; moreouer, when it pleaseth thee also to chastise vs with thy rods, let vs not shew our selues stif-necked against thee: but let vs learne quietly to submit our selues to thy good word: also as oft as thou smitest vs, grant we may receiue thy corrections, that thus we may profit our selues by both these meanes: lest otherwise we bring downe vpon our owne heads the extremity of thy iudgements, which thou threatenest all hard-hearted persons withall: but rather giue vs passage into thy sweet and fatherly kindnesse: yea deale (O Lord) thus fauourably and graciously with vs, vntill thou hast gathered vs into

that blessed rest which is prepared for vs in heauen, and that through Iesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE NINTH LECTVRE, WHICH IS THE FIFTH VPON THE second Chapter.

Part of the 30. verse.

Your sword hath deuoured your Prophets, like a destroying Lion.

IN the former lecture, God complained that he had spent his labour in vain in chastising the children of Israel, in regard they were of so rebellious and stubborne a nature, that they could not be tamed by any discipline or correction. I haue lost my time (saith hee) in endeauouring by chastisements and corrections, to bring you home: but now hee aggrauates this crime of stubbornesse and wilfulnesse, because they not onely reiected all wholesome admonitions, but *shead innocent blood*? Why so? Because *they persecuted* and pursued *the Prophets*, no lesse than if they had been their open enemies, who yet notwithstanding were sent vnto them from God, to procure their saluation. For this cause God heere not onely accuseth them of *rebellion*, but of *cruelty* also: for he saith, hee attained not his desire; namely, their conuersion. Besides, they were not onely obstinate and vntamed, but also behaued themselues both currishly and cruelly euen towards *their owne Prophets*. For we know that Ierusalem was become *a shambles*, or butchery, wherein many of Gods true Prophets were slaine and murthered. Some expound this place of false teachers: as if the Prophet had said, the sinnes of the people were the cause why the Prophets were punished according to

Mat. 23. 37. Luk. 13. 34.

their deserts; in regard they were liars and deceiuers: and those who thus expound it, insist vpon this word, *your*: your sword hath deuoured *your* Prophets: which is the cause why Saint *Ierome* saith, *your*, and not *my* Prophets: as if God denied that he gaue them any commission: but this is a forced sense, and too much constrained. We are therefore to retaine that sense which I haue giuen; to wit, that whilest God laboured to reforme the vices which then raigned amongst this people, the Prophets being the Ministers of this gracious message, euen the people themselues *put them cruelly to death*. And the similitude which immediatly followes, agrees very well with this exposition: *as a Lion deuouring*. For God shewes that the Iewes carried themselues as cruelly and sauagely towards the Prophets: *as if the Prophets had been in some forrest full of Lions*. Now it followes.

Vers. 31. *O generation, take ye your selues heed to the word of the Lord: Haue I been a desert to Israel? Haue I been as a land of darknesse? Wherefore* then *saith my people, we are Lords, we will come no more vnto thee?*

NO doubt but the Prophet speakes heere *as a man astonished*, that he might make the fault of this people the more odious and detestable. For as one amazed, he saith, *O generation*: the Hebrew word (as it is well knowne) signifies an age. Thus it is as much as if hee had said, Lord into what times are we fallen! or in what an age or world liue we in now! We haue the propriety of the word then. The Prophet addes, *looke to the word of the Lord*. It seemes he speakes improperly: for he should rather haue said, Vnderstand, or heare the word of the Lord: but he commands them *to see*, or looke: and yet this phrase of speech agrees very well, Why so? Because he bids them not heare; but rather hee brings them to their owne knowledge: as if he should say, *looke you to it, see what it is the Lord saith*. And where he saith, *euen you*,

or, *you your selues*, it is to adde the greater emphasis and vehemency vnto his speech: *you*, euen *you*, saith hee. For the Iewes iustly deserued to haue been condemned by the whole world, if God had called them before his iudgment seat. But how blind soeuer they were, the Prophet shewes that *themselues* notwithstanding might discerne, euen with their *owne eyes*, what the Lord said. This belongs not to doctrine, but to the act or thing it selfe: as if he should say, The Lord by me complaines of you: so as though there be no witnesses, nor any iudge or arbitrator, yet *ye your selues can iudge and perceiue* how things goe, well enough. Wee see then that the Prophet hath spoken aptly, when he bids *themselues to regard, or see, the word of the Lord*: for by and by hee adds, *Haue I been a desert to Israel?* He appoints the Iewes themselues then, *to iudge and determine* this matter; to wit, whether they had not tasted of Gods bounty and liberality by their owne experience, and whether they had not reiected and forsaken him, as formerly he complained, albeit he was that fountaine of liuing waters; and whether they digged not vnto themselues broken cesternes that could hold no water. Now God saith, Whence came this that you haue thus bidden me farwell? Is it in vaine that I haue promised to shew my selfe gracious & bountifull vnto you? *Haue I therein abused or disappoynted you of your expectation, whilest you serued me?* Seeing then I haue not been vnto you *a barren land*, or a land full of obscurity *and darknesse, namely, wherein the Sunne shines not*: seeing (I say) you haue alwayes found abundance and plenty of all good things in me; how comes it to passe now that you are departed and gone away from me?

Seuers. 13.

In the next place he adds yet another faule; *Wherefore saith my people, we rule, or, are Lords?* The Hebrew verbe heere vsed is diuersly expounded; because some deriue it from one root, and others from another. Notwithstanding, among them that deriue it from one and the same root, they varie in their iudgements: for some referre it to

those

those calamities and afflictions which the Iewes sustained: others, to their reuolt. As touching the first, thus they vnderstand it, We are come downe: that is to say, we are ouerwhelmed with miseries, what shall it auaile vs to call vpon God? For all our affaires are become vtterly desperate. Others chuse a contrary sense, We are gone backe; that is, what need the Prophets trouble our eares any more with their clamors: for we are resolued neuer to returne to God; we haue at once renounced him: let him goe then with all his goodly exhortations, for we will neither heare him, nor doe ought for him: and both are of opinion, that this is a speech of such as are growne desperate. But we see well enough wherein they differ: for the first sort vnderstand this word, *To descend*; of the peoples calamities: the latter sort take it for their reuolt; to wit, because they had once taken their leaues of God, and would haue no more to doe with him. There is a third sort who come neater to the Grammaticall sense. For the verbe heere vsed in the originall, signifies *to rule*: and thus I rather willingly encline to this exposition, *we rule*: I also thinke, that it is *an arrogant and swelling kind of speech*; namely, that the Iewes thought themselues Kings, as Saint *Paul* in 1. Cor. 4. 8. taunts the Corinthians, *ye are rich, and yee raigne as kings* (saith he) *without vs: would to God ye did raigne, that we also might raigne with you.* For the Corinthians were swollen with pride, in regard of the wealth of their City, and so despised the Gospels simplicity: they sought after subtelties, and gaue themselues wholly to new deuices. Saint *Paul* therefore seeing they made no great reckoning of the fauour which God had vouchsafed them, tauntingly he saith, Ye are full, ye are rich, and without him ye raighe as Kings, of whom notwithstanding ye [illegible] whatsoeuer good thing ye haue. *Ieremiah* heere reproueth his people with the very same sinne: *We rule, neither will wee come any more vnto thee.* As if he should say, All your happinesse and the good things yee enioy (I am sure) came from

Corinth was famous in regard of her riches.

from me: for all ye enioy, and whatsoeuer hath been bestowed vpon you, ought to be attributed to me and to my liberality: and yet (forsooth) *ye raigne as Kings without me.* For *it is God himselfe who speakes heere: ye are now become Kings without mee.* But which way I pray you? what haue you, that is your owne? *Why* then *saith my people, we will come no more at thee?* Wee haue now the Prophets naturall meaning.

1 As touching the thing it selfe (as wee told you before) first, *he stands as one amazed* at the peoples malice, euen as at some prodigious thing: and therefore he cries out, *O generation!* as if he had said, That which I now see, is incredible. Then he adds, *looke your selues to the word of the Lord*: and this was of greater importance, than if hee had summoned them before the tribunall seat of God: for thus he shewes their malice is too too grosse, in that without any cause or pretext at all, they had shamelesly forsaken & renounced God, albeit he had dealt so bountifully with them. In the meane while hee priuily nippes them, because there was now no place any longer for instruction. Therefore leauing that, he bids them *looke with their eyes, either because they were deafe, or stopped their eares,* and repulsed all sound admonitions. For as we haue said, *leauing the word,* he brings them backe to the very fact; which the expositors haue not obserued.

3 Now the reproach followes, *that God was not as a wildernesse vnto them:* but (as the Prophet shewed heretofore) that out of him flowed abundance of all good things wherewith they might haue satisfied themselues. Seeing God then had enriched them with his blessings, so much the more hainous was their fault, in that they had forsaken him. Now in the last part of the verse, God complaines of their ingratitude, in regard they thought themselues *lords.* I grant they were a royall priesthood: but this came from Gods grace. In that they *raigned,* they obtained it not by their owne industry or power: it was not from any right of theirs, neither yet by their po-

See verse 13.

wer, or good fortune, as they say. Whence then? Onely by way of entreaty. Albeit they were *kings* then, yet it was vpon condition, that they yeelded obedience to the King of kings, and not otherwise: yet (forsooth) they would *raigne alone*: that is, as they lifted: and thus they trampled the grace of God vnder foot. It is this peruersity of theirs then, which the Prophet heere reprooues. To the same purpose also in the end of the verse he saith, *wee will come no more vnto thee*: as if they needed not Gods helpe and succour: for they thought themselues now iolly fellowes, as if they had been sufficiently furnished for the maintenance of their estates. Being thus swollē with so peruerse a pride, they contemned Gods grace, as if they had beene safe enough of themselues, without the stay of a second.

Vers. 32. *Can a maid forget her ornament, or a bride her head-band?* as it is word for word: others translate, trinkets: others, her chaines: the word is deriued of a verbe which signifies, to binde: In our French wee may properly turne it, Tressures: *but my people haue forgotten me, dayes without number*: word for word it is, *without end.*

GOd heere confirmes his former speech; and his meaning therein is, to shame his people, in regard *they lesse esteemed him, than virgins were wont to esteeme their toyes and trifles.* For all the chaines and deckings are (in truth) but so many fooles-bables: and yet we see notwithstanding, how maides are carried away with such a fond affecting of them, that they loue their tires and toyes more than their owne liues. *How canst be then* (saith the Lord) *that my people haue forgotten me? Are any deckings to be compared with me? Among all the pearles, and the most precious and exquisite stones, are any to bee found that may be valued with me?*

By this similitude then, God declares how the Iewes were naturally wicked and peruerse, in that they had thus forgotten

forgotten so inestimable a benefit: to wit, in enioying God for their father; and vnder his rule and dominion, enioying whatsoeuer their hearts could wish. For hee withheld no good thing from them, that might any way serue to make them perfectly happy, whileſt they were capable of enioying his fatherly loue and liberality; so as God had manifested the same vnto them, and meant they should still so haue found him, vnto the very end. Seeing then they had found God kind and gracious: must they not needs be *more than senseleſſe*, whileſt they willingly reiected his grace? *when as virgins are so affectioned and wholly addicted to their toyes (which albeit they are of no worth) yet can they by no meanes forget them?* But the Prophet vſed this similitude of set purpoſe, to make way to that which followes. For his meaning was to compare the Iewes to adulterous women, who being set on fire with their vnbridled luſts and wicked affections, ſuffer themſelues to be caried away after their louers. Purpoſing then to reproach the Iewes with this crime, hee expreſly mentioned *neck-laces*, and ſuch toyes belonging to young damſels; and therefore it followes.

Verſ. 33. *Wherefore deckeſt* or trimmeſt *thou*, that is, ſo finely, *thy waies, to ſeeke for louers? And therefore alſo thou haſt taught wickedneſſe in thy waies.*

THis verſe is diuerſly expounded. But the Prophet meant onely to tell *the Iewes that they were like wanton women, who not content to contemne their husbands at home, gad hither and thither; and alſo vſe to trick and trim vp themſelues, the better to allure many to commit wickedneſſe with them.* He ſaith then that the Iewes reſembled theſe: and this he calles, *trimming of their waies*: for this verbe hath a diuers ſignification in the Hebrew. It is taken to make ready, to decke, to get grace or fauour: but in this place it ſignifies as much as if the Prophet had ſaid, *Wherefore paintſt thou thy ſelfe? why diſguiſeſt thou*

thy

thy selfe, as harlots vse to doe? who to entice foolish springals to whoredome, deuise many fashions and artificiall trimmings: why then labourest thou so earnestly to obtaine the hire of an harlot? In the end of the chapter we shall see to what purpose he saith this: for the Prophet will there reproach the Egyptians and Assyrians. But it is a doctrine which is euery where handled in the prophets; for euer and anon they compare the Iewes to courtizans, in regard they (who aboue all others) ought wholly to haue cleaued to their God: (euen as an honest wife will not lightly suffer her eyes to wander heere and there, neither will shee be straggling abroad, but set her affections wholly vpon her husband) yet they thought it was not onely lawfull, but necessary also to procure their safety; first from the Assyrians, and then to trot downe into Egypt. It is this peruersnesse of theirs then, which the Prophet heere condemnes in them: and therefore he speakes vnto them vnder *a similitude*, or borrowed speech: as of the person of an adulterous woman, who setting light by her husband, runnes after the first commers, seekes out to her selfe adulterers, and vnaduised youthes, and prostitutes her selfe on euery side freely to all. Now wee vnderstand the Prophets meaning.

As touching the words heere vsed by the Prophet, hee saith, *wherefore garnishest thou thy wayes so trimly?* But yet he continues still to compare such a care as this, to the body of an harlot: as if hee should say, Why trimmest thou thy selfe vp thus? What makes thee so industrious in studying how to decke thy selfe with such diuersities of trimmings and ornaments? Is it not, that by such a decking thou mayest the better deceiue the eyes of the simple? Out of question the Iewes might (if they would) haue liued in great tranquillity and ease, vnder Gods protection; and that without any molestation at all. For euen as the husband satisfies himselfe with that naturall beauty which his wife hath, and cares not to haue her paint her face, nor to disguise her selfe with artificiall dressings,

Note.

dreſſings: ſo God likewiſe requires nothing of his people, but that they keep their faith & loyalty to him: as the husband requires his wife to keepe her body and mind chaſt to him. The ſumme then is, *that euen as a wife which ſhall liue peaceably and quietly with her husband, hath no need to breake her braines* (as they ſay) *with much carking, becauſe ſhe knowes that naturall beauty God hath giuen her, contents her husband; neither will ſhe with other deuices labour much to gaine her husbands loue, knowing that her chaſtity to him is the beſt pledge: ſo alſo might you* (ſaith the Lord) *leue without care or trouble, in yeelding onely vnto mee that ſeruice which my Law requires, and in keeping your faith vnviolated. But what chaſtity call you this, when you imitate ſuch women as are wholly giuen ouer to harlotry, deſiring nothing more, than that they may draw the hearts of adulterers vnto them? for as they burne and are inflamed with luſt; ſo is it their only care how they may find out new deuices, and gands, thinking they haue neuer enough; and all becauſe they would bend and draw their louers to the liking of them. This* (ſaith God) *is your very caſe; for you are neuer wearie in hunting vp and downe after your game: neither ceaſe you to vexe your ſelues in ſeeking out ſtrange louers.*

The ſumme.

Now he adds, *And therefore* (ſaith he) *thou haſt taught wickedneſſe.* He alludes to that word which hee vſed before, Truly thou haſt trimmed thy wayes: and heere, *thou haſt alſo* (ſaith hee) *taught wickedneſſe in thy wayes.* His meaning is, that the Iewes were worſe than the Egyptians and Aſſyrians: as in truth a wanton wife is much worſe than any harlot, who takes her followers by her flatteries and enticements. For if ſo bee a young man bee not deceiued elſewhere, and that the diuell (as they ſay) puts not fire to the tow, hee may well continue his integrity and chaſtity: but if a luſtfull and impudent woman come once to ſeduce him, he is by and by ſnared and vndone. Therefore the Prophet ſaith, *the Egyptians and Aſſyrians ſhall bee found innocent, being compared with the Iewes.* Why ſo? Becauſe (ſaith he) they haue been ſedu-

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ced by your allurements, euen as young men are enticed and brought to ruine by the cunning deceits, and the ornaments and attires of harlots. For it fares with them as if vnawares they had been caught in a net: therefore you haue been the authors of all the mischiefe, and the whole blame rests vpon you. Thus wee see the Prophets meaning. For he accuseth the Iewes, for giuing the Assyrians as well as the Egyptians, occasion of offence by their ill example, whilest by their practices they sought to win their fauour.

Vers. 34. *Also in thy wings is found the blood of the soules of poore innocents; I haue not found it in holes, but vpon all these* places: some turne it, because in all these: for it is a particle that renders the cause; but heere it ought to bee resolued into an aduersatiue, as in many places.

THe Prophet (as farre as I can iudge) repeates that which he said before; namely, that those of his nation were become altogether desperately wicked; in regard that what admonition soeuer was giuen them, yet could they neuer be brought to acknowledge their faults: but on the contrary fared like poysonfull and wild beasts, in murthering the Prophets and holy men which were sent to teach and admonish them. Those are mistaken, who thinke the Prophet heere condemnes all the Iewes in generall, in respect of their cruelty; and yet all follow this opinion. But questionlesse the Prophet rather amplifies the fault of the Iewes; not onely in that they were hardened in their euill courses; but also because they exercised their cruelties against the Prophets of God. And thus he once againe shewes, that God vsed all meanes that could be, to cure the Iewes, by bringing them to repentance, but nothing would serue the turne. For what better remedy could he procure for them, than the reprehensions of his Prophets, who shewed the people how they had loosely and wickedly turned away, and estranged

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ged themselues from God. See the meanes then, by which God endeauoured to rebuke the vices which were in his people: but so farre was he off from preuailing thereby, that they *murthered his Prophets*, both in Ierusalem, and in all the coasts of Iudeah; so as all the land was defiled, and replenished with their blood. Therefore he saith, *The blood of the soules of poore Innocents is found in thy wings.* He calles the hemme of their garments, *wings*: as if he meant to say, the murthers wherewith he chargeth them were not very secret or vnknowne; in regard the blood which the Iewes had spilt, was apparantly found euen vpon *the vtter most parts of their garments*. As if hee should say, I need not now stand vpon poynts with you, for your filthinesse is very manifest and apparant: for you haue not onely resisted mine admonitions, but you haue cruelly killed my Prophets. And if you aske me, Where are these murthers? I answere, *in your wings, and in the hemmes of your garments*: that is to say, your offences are but too manifest. Now then ye haue the Prophets meaning. Also for this cause the particle *yea rather*, is to be noted diligently: for their cruelty was so much the more insupportable and detestable, in regard they rose vp against those that were sent to cure their soules. For the Prophets were the ministers of their saluation, as we haue said. Seeing then they rushed thus violently against that grace which God presented vnto them, and therewithall slew his Prophets: by this, one might the more easily iudge, that they were become vtterly incurable.

That which is forthwith added, makes for the further confirmation of his speech: *they were not found in fraction, or breaking*. Some expound this place otherwise. But their opinion is probable who thinke the Prophet alludes to that which is spoken by *Moses*, in Exod. 22. 2. If any one were found making a breach, hee that slew him in doing the fact, should escape vnpunished. For he that is so bold as to breake into another mans house, is like to him that robs by the hie-way side: such an one therefore cannot

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be held for a petty theefe, but rather for a common cut-throat that lurkes in his wayes. God then saith, that his Prophets whom the Iewes put to death, were not found forcibly breaking into houses: that is to say, they were neither found guilty of felony, or murther (for he puts one kind for the generall) *but they were vpon all these things*: that is to say, in regard they boldly and freely reproued you of your faults, because they sharply rebuked your wickednesses, and discouered your shame and filthinesse; and because they shewed themselues enemies to all your iniquities, trecheries, and loose behauiours. *Thus then, because the Prophets being prouoked by diuine inspiration, strone against your sinnes; therefore you put them to death.* We see the text runnes well thus, if it be only vnderstood of the Prophets: and to say as the thing is, *Ieremiah* meant not only to reprooue the Iewes for the murthers they committed heere and there, but to shew how they were the deadly enemies of the Prophets, in regard they hated all holy and sound admonitions, and were vncapable of any instruction. The errour of the other expositors is sufficiently refuted; because in the last member, they neither touch heauen nor earth, as they say. It followes,

Verf. 35. *And thou saidest*, that is, Notwithstanding: for this word *and*, is taken heere for neuertheleſſe: *Surely*, in the Hebrew it is For, but it notes out a boasting, full of impudency; in regard the Iewes were growne so malepert, and shameleſſe withall, that they durst iustifie their innocency. *Surely I am cleane*: that is, I am innocent; *surely let his wrath be farre from me. Behold, I will iudge thee*, or enter into iudgement with thee, *because thou hast said, I haue not sinned.*

THe Prophet heere shewes how the Iewes were growne so shameleſſe, that it was impoſſible by any admonitions whatsoeuer, to bring them to any blushing, or

or moderate course. Albeit then they were like adulterous women, and ran like harlots into euery place, to get some reward: and although they also had slaine the Prophets, and holy seruants of God; yet, as if they had been no way culpable, they bragged (forsooth) of their *innocency*. *Neuertheles* (saith he) *yet haue I said*, that is to say, How darest thou pretend thou art any way innocent, seeing thou art conuinced not onely by surmises or coniectures, but by so manifest and apparant demonstrations? Moreouer, the Prophet shewes, that the estate and condition of the Iewes was vtterly desperate, seeing they would no more be admonished: nay on the contrary, they were growne so obstinate, that they *durst vaunt of their innocency*. *Thou hast said* (note that he still speakes in the *singular number*, as to a wife) *Thou hast notwithstanding said, Surely I am cleane*. See how hypocrites not onely labour with diuers maskes, to excuse themselues; but more than that, are so bold, as to aduance themselues, and poure in the ayre, as if by their confident pride they would scale euen the very heauens. As if they had said, Who dare challenge vs? Lo how hypocrites offer in a sort by aduancing themselues, in despiting and reuiling flat by the seruants of God, thinking by their great crakes to put them to silence. Now he condemnes the Iewes of the like arrogancy; because albeit they were manifestly conuinced, yet they feared not to affirme that they were altogether innocent.

Onely let him keepe backe his wrath from me. Behold yet another fault for which the Prophet reprocheth the Iewes; namely, because they complained that God offered them wrong, whileft by his chastisements and reprehensions hee endeauoured to bring them into the
1 right way. For it is well knowne that God had already
2 many wayes afflicted the Iewes: besides, he had thereunto added many sharp and seuere reprehensions. By which two meanes he prooued if hee might any way doe them good. But what did they? *Surely I haue no way offended him*,

him, but God is displeased against me without cause: onely let him withdraw his anger from me. As if they had said, *If so be God will not vse his absolute power against vs, and will not deale rigorously with vs, nor handle vs seuerely; it will be easie for vs to proue our innocency.* See how the wicked disgorge their blasphemies against God, when they feele themselues throughly gauled with sharpe and seuere admonitions, *What should I doe? I know I am not able to resist: God fights but against a shadow, whenbee afflicts me on this manner. I willingly beare, not onely all the aduersities he layes vpon me, but wherewith hee presseth and persecuteth me: yet therein he wrongs me. For if hee would proceed with me according to equity, I would be able to proue, that I haue not deserued all the euils which hee hath brought vpon me.* Thus the Iewes dealt with God. *Onely let him withdraw his anger from vs, and then we shall make our party good; or at the least we might be somewhat better withall.* Now we haue the Prophets meaning in this verse; namely, that the Iewes were growne bold and audacious, not onely by their cursed pride, in making a shew *of their innocency*; but also in that they durst plead with God, *as if he had handled them too seuerely*, by his prerogatiue royall; and as if he meant not to call them to a iudicious hearing, but proceeded against them rigorously, that so hee might ouerthrow and destroy them. 1 2

Behold (saith hee) *I will iudge thee, because thou hast said, I haue not sinned.* Some translate, I iudge, or condemne. But questionlesse there is heere a close opposition betweene the *wrath* of God, and *his iudgement*. For the people complained, because God vsed them too seuerely: the question here then is, touching his *wrath*. Now God, he opposeth against that, *his iudgement*. You need not (saith he) pretend this excuse; for in the end it will goe all into smoke, *because I will proceed in iustice against you*: that is, *I will manifest it by the effects, that I am a iudge, and no tyrant*, that I doe execute such chastisements as are due, and euery way agreeable to law: you

are therefore to know, that I fare not like a furious man, who in his rage auengeth himselfe vpon his enemies; yea and proceeds with them according to his blind and inordinate passions; but I will (saith hee) shew my selfe a iudge.

1 *God cannot endure we should iustifie our selues before him, when we be guilty:*

2 *For that is to rush against God.*

Hence we may gather a profitable instruction. And in the first place, let vs obserue, that God abhorres nothing more, than this obstinacy, when we will needs be reputed guiltlesse, albeit our owne consciences condemne vs. Let vs also in the second place note, that all such as aduance themselues thus with this insolencie and pride, and with an impudent obstinacy, not sticking to vphold themselues in their sinnes; that they forthwith ruffle against God. For all the false pretences which men alleage, come alwayes to this issue, namely, that God must thereby be condemned, as one that deales vniustly, and too seuerely. But will you see what such kind of persons get by this? *God will in the end make it apparant to all the world, that he is iudge: and thereby also will manifest the euerse he holds, in discouering and bringing to light, the wickednesse of those, who thinke by shifts, cauils, and frinolous excuses, to escape his iudgement seat.* It must needs be then, that whosoeuer rebelliously vseth these practises against God, must at length come to that which the Prophet heere mentions: to wit, they shall be enforced, will they, nill they, to confesse, that God neuer carried himselfe rigorously towards them: neither that he vsed any vniust tyranny ouer them; but that they were chastised according to their deserts.

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The Prayer.

Almighty God, seeing we are stuffed full with such variety of vices, and that wee so often, yea and so many waies prouoke thee to wrath and indignation against vs; grant that at least we neuer harden our hearts against thy holy admonitions, but may rather shew our selues pliable and obedient,

and at the very first, may turne vnto thee, leſt our pride and rebellion force thee at length to manifeſt thy mighty hand to our confuſion: but rather for as much as heretofore wee haue had experience of thy fatherly affection and liberality towards vs, ſo we alſo may yeeld willingly to learne our duties for the time to come, that thus wee accuſtoming our ſelues to beare thy yoke; at the laſt attaining to the end of our race which thou haſt ſet before vs, we may alſo obtaine that bleſſed reſt which is prepared for vs in heauen, through Ieſus Chriſt our Lord. Amen

THE TENTH LECTVRE, WHICH IS THE SIXTH VPON THE ſecond Chapter.

Verſ. 36. To what purpoſe runneſt thou about to change thy wayes? Thou ſhalt be as well confounded of Egypt, as thou haſt been of Aſſur.

THe Prophet goes on ſtill with the ſame argument. For in verſ. 33. hee affirmed that the people reſembled a diſloyall wife, who forſaking her husband, gads hither and thither to ſatisfie her whoriſh luſt. Now in this verſe he giues the reaſon of that which hee he ſaid there. For had he not now ſhewed what he taxed them there for, as with the finger, it might haue ſeemed that he had dealt too ſeuerely with this people. For this cauſe then he ſaith, they gadded, or *runne*; but not after a common manner: for it was in ſuch ſort as their ſhameleſſe and diſhoneſt lightneſſe might eaſily bee eſpied, no leſſe than in harlots, who hauing caſt off all modeſty, ſticke not *to ſeeke after whore-maſters and ruffians.* But I haue already touched the Prophets meaning briefly. For the

Deut. 17. 16.

Gen. 13. 2. and 17. 4.

See verſ. 18. 25.

the Iewes no sooner saw any danger approaching, but they ranne for refuge one while to Egypt, and another while to Assyria: and yet they knew that both the one, and the other was forbidden them: not that it is vnlawfull in it selfe to seeke for helpe at the hands of our neighbours, in time of extremity; but God meant to reserue vnto himselfe the whole praise of maintaining and keeping this people, so as no hurt could befall them, in regard hee had taken the defence of the Iewes into his owne hands. Seeing then that God had taken vpon him the safeguard of them; it was good reason they should rest themselues content with his succour? *Whilest they gazed heere and there then, they shewed a manifest signe of their distrust: and so much as they attributed to the Egyptians, or to the Assyrians, so much they tooke from their God, who by his promise had bound himselfe, that hee would take the care of their welfare and saluation.* Thus then he compares such gaddings to the lightnesse of an harlot, when shee runnes too and fro. Now it must needs be, that an whore is growne past all shame, when she goes thus about seeking customers, and entertaines him she first lights vpon. For there are some harlots that tarry whilest others seeke to them: but such as offer themselues to all commers, iustly deserue to be detested of all. This is that which the Prophet meant then, namely when he saith, the Iewes ranne about, and that in such sort, as *they changed their wayes:* for euen in some immodest women, a man shall perceiue some natural shamefastnesse to remaine in them: but if a woman, as soone as she hath but cast the glaunce of her eye vpon a man, doth by and by runne after him; or if a man, as soone as hee espies one but comming towards him, shall be inflamed with lust; it is a signe of more than a shameleſſe, brutish, yea a monstrous filthinesse. When one is growne to this passe then, it must needs thereupon follow, that they haue lost all shamefastnesse, and haue put out in them the very light of nature also. Therefore (as I haue said) it is good reason that such

Deut. 17. 16.

Gen. 12. 3. and 15. 14.

be held as monsters vpon earth, when men or women are thus carried away after whomsoeuer they set eye on. And yet with this the Prophet taxeth the Iewes, whilest he tels them, *they ranne about to change their wayes*; so as their restlesse lust neuer stayed long in any place whatsoeuer: but they fell in loue with the first commers, yea and ran from place to place to seeke them out. *Ezechiel* handles this matter much more largely in many places: we shall also see the same similitude repeated againe in this prophesie. But it sufficeth that in few words I haue comprehended the Prophets meaning. Now he adds.

Thou shalt be confounded of Egypt, as thou hast been of Ashur. For before *Hezekias* his time, the Iewes (as it is well knowne) had made a league with the Assyrians, against those of Syria, and the Israelites; and afterwards against the Egyptians. But after the Egyptians (who before had been their confederates) began to make warre against them, they changed their minds, and sought to the Assyrians; and there they entred into a league with their ancient enemies: thus this second couenant also stood them in no more stead than did the first: which is the cause why the Prophet tels them they shall haue the like successe they had before. For God corrects their trechery and disloyalty which they had committed against him, in running to the Assyrians. Now he saith vnto them, thy successe shall bee no better in waiting for helpe from Egypt, thã that which thou hadst from Ashur, when he came to succour thee. For none can be ignorant, that the Iewes were still euer and anon, exposed as a prey to euery one; so as they receiued more losse by their very confederates, than by such as were their open and professed enemies. And this was the iust reward of their impiety and trechery. God therefore threatens that hee will be no lesse auenged of this their second rebellion, than he was of the first. It followes.

Vers. 37. *And euen for this*, that is to say, this thine iniquity, *thou shalt goe forth, and thy hands vpon thine head, because the Lord abhorreth thy confidences, neither shalt thou prosper in them.*

HE heere more plainly expresseth that which hee had said touching the reproach of his nation; namely, that whileſt the Iewes thought to reſt vpon the aide of the Egyptians, they therby weaued the web of their own ruine. But this they beleeued not: for the Egyptians being their next neighbours, and the Iewes at that time feared no enemies but the Aſſyrians and Caldeans, who were farre remote from them, they imagined that their matters would ſucceed well, and be in great ſafety. How ſo? Our aduerſaries are twenty or thirty dayes iourney from vs; and our friends who are ready to ſuccour vs, are heere at our gates, as ſoone as they ſhall haue but the leaſt warning. The Iewes then (as I haue ſaid) thought themſelues very ſecure: but the Prophet telles them here, that they are much deceiued. For, *for this iniquity*, that is, *becauſe thou truſtedſt in this ſo curſed a couenant*, thereby promiſing ſafety to thy ſelfe, in regard of thine enemies; or rather becauſe thou imagineſt thou mighteſt with little adoe ouercome them. *For this cauſe* (ſaith he) *thou ſhalt goe forth.* And yet, was any thing more vnlikely, or incredible, than that which the Prophet here tels them? For whileſt the Egyptians oppoſed themſelues againſt the Caldeans, they were to the Iewes, as a braſen wall ſet betweene, whereby they were (in a manner) inuincible: who would not haue thought the Iewes moſt ſafe in their owne countrey? *Thou ſhalt goe forth* then (ſaith he) *and thine hands vpon thine head.*

By this geſture he meant to note out, an eſtate vtterly deſperate. For it is the cuſtome of *women*, either to lament, or to ſpread abroad their armes, as they vſually doe amongſt vs, when they are preſſed with any extremity. 2. Sam. 13. 19.

For

For if some impatient woman haue lost her husband; or, if she expect some great euill, she beats on her breast, or spreads out her armes, as it is heere said. *Ieremiah then puts this gesture for a signe of exceeding sorrow:* as if hee should say, *This couenant vpon which the Iewes rest with such an insolent boldnesse, shall be so farre off from bringing profit or ministring comfort vnto them, that it shall rather be the cause of extreame affliction and reproach vnto them.*

But aboue all, the reason which followes is to bee noted; *Because the Lord abhorres thy confidences, or prides.* For the Prophet heere shewes the reason, why he speakes so bitterly to them. Because a man indeed would haue thought this an excessiue manner of speech, to compare this people vnto a common strumpet, who fiskes abroad into euery corner. But this reason stood in stead of a thousand, to take from them all shifts and euasions; namely, that it was to no purpose for them to rest vpon such broken reeds, and deceiueable leaning stockes. Why so? *Because they were accursed of God.* For had hee permitted them freely to haue vsed them, then had they not been so sharply reprooued. But seeing God had forbidden them to goe downe into Egypt: this, in the first place, was an abominable confidence: secondly, it was a meanes to make them altogether careleſſe of Gods assistance; and (as you would say) to reiect all his promises. For in as much as their affections were fast glued to the Egyptians, they also imagined, that in them, their safety was secure. By meanes whereof it came to passe, that their prayers were not onely few, and faint, but they scarcely so much as vsed any at all. Thus we see how the Prophet passeth not his bounds heere in this his vehement reprehension vttered against the Iewes, in setting *shame and ignominie* before their eyes: namely, because they gaue that glory to the Egyptians, which appertained vnto God; making their account as if they had been the authors of their safety: and thereby also they buried in oblivion, yea contemned all the promises of God, and vtterly neglected

Deut. 17. 16.
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inuocation vpon his name. *The Lord* then (saith he) *abhors thy confidences.*

In the next place he saith, *Neither shalt thou prosper thereby.* This must bee diligently obserued, namely, that when we take ought in hand which God approoues not, that no good can come vnto vs thereby. Why so? Because he will frustrate all our hopes. Let vs know then that the Prophet sets a punishment before all vnbeleeuers, who not contenting themselues with Gods protection, wander in their vaine and idle confidences; and had rather enioy the fauour and good liking of men, than the fauour and loue of God. Now it followes.

No good can come of that action, that God approoues not.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Vers. 1. * *And saying, If a man put away his wife, and shee goe from him, and become another mans, shall hee returne againe vnto her? shall not this land heereby be polluted? And thou; thou hast played the harlot with many louers: notwithstanding, returne vnto me, saith Iehouah.*

* or, put the case

MAny thinke this verse depends vpon the former, so as they reade it ioyntly together; God hath reiected thy crooked confidences, *And saying, &c.* But as I thinke, this agrees not: because *Ieremiah* heere begins a new speech, namely, God endeauours to reconcile this people; euen as if a husband should desire to receiue an adulterous wife into his fauour againe: meaning wholly to passe by her former faults, and hereafter to esteeme of her as a chast and loyall wife. Thus you see this verse cannot agree with that reproach which we saw before: but the Hebrew word which is put heere in the beginning of this verse, (as I thinke) signifies that

See chap. 3. 37.

which

which we haue in our vsuall speech: as you would say, or rather, put the case. For the Prophet brings not in God speaking heere; but hee comes in with a common sentence: and therefore he saith, *Put the case that a man put away his wife, and she become another mans, shall she returne againe to the first? No; for this is not the custome. I therefore will shew my selfe more fauourable than any man whatsoeuer: for I will be most ready to take thee againe: prouided, thou promise me for the time to come, to carry thy selfe as an honest woman ought to doe:* to wit, *loyally towards me, in renouncing all thy former loose and lewd behauiour.* You see there is no great difficulty in that which the Prophet meant to say, nor in the summe of his speech. For God here shewes that his wrath shall be appeased towards the Iewes, if so be they proceed not on still in their vngodlinesse, obstinately and rebelliously. And the better to expresse this his clemency, he vseth a similitude, which ought aduisedly to be noted. Before, he said, that hee held the place of an husband; and that this people was vnto him in his account, as a wife, chap. 2. 2. In the next place he bewailes their grieuous ingratitude and disloyalty, in that they had thus forsaken him; telling them it was all one, as if a wife forsaking her husband, should prostitute her selfe to all commers. Heere he adds, *Behold, if an husband put away his wife, and she marry with another, he would neuer entertaine such a wife againe into his fauour:* for hee was forbidden so to doe, by the Law. *But see how ready I am notwithstanding, to take thee againe;* albeit the diuorce came not as in respect of my fault. For it was the custome of the husbands then, to put away their wiues, when there appeared in them any cause of dislike. It is not a simple comparison, as many thinke, (neither doe I know whether all follow this opinion) for the expositors doe not so much as touch this exposition: because God doth not simply heere compare himselfe with an husband that hath put away his wife for her lewdnesse; but as I haue said, there are two distinct members, in regard the

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Iewes

Iewes were wont to cashere their wiues for very light causes; yea for such as were of no moment at all. Now God speakes thus in *Isaiah, Shew me your bill of diuorce*: as if he should say, I haue not put away your mother. For at that time, when any purposed to put away his wife, he was liable by the law, to the note of some fickleneſſe. For what (I pray you) was that bill of diuorcement, but a testimony of the wiues chastity? otherwise, if the woman had been taken in adultery, the husband needed not to send her away, for shee was to suffer death. Thus then, *adulterous women vsed not to be diuorced*. But if a mans wife had liued honestly with her husband, and yet notwithstanding he meant to put her away, hee was bound by the law to giue her a bill of diuorce, on this manner: *I put away this woman, not for breaking or violating the marriage band; but because her personage, or qualities are not to my liking*. Thus the husbands were obliged to incurre some note of inconstancy; and therefore it is that the Lord saith in *Isaiah, Shew me the bill of your mothers diuorce*: as if he should say, it is shee her selfe that hath cast me off: it is she, who by her whoredomes hath broken the sacred bond of marriage: it is not I then, that am the cause of this alienation. God meant not heere then to signifie that he diuorced the people; for that was a thing worthy of blame, and therefore could not agree with Gods nature: but (as I said) there is a double similitude or comparison. *Albeit an husband in his discontent had reiected his wife; and that by meanes thereof (by his owne fault) he occasions her to marry another: notwithstanding, after a second hath lien with her, because hee thinkes he is now despised, he esteemes it so great an indignity, that he will neuer admit of any reconciliation. But I thinke you will not say that I haue sent you away: you rather haue played the part of a disloyall wife, hauing prostituted your selues to the first commers; yet am I ready notwithstanding to receiue you into fauour, and to forget all your former slips and falles*. Now we haue the summe of that which the Prophet meant to

Isa. 50. 1.

Leuit. 20. 10.
Deut. 22. 22.
Deut. 24. 1.

say

say heere. And in this second member there is a *comparison from the lesse to the greater*. For the agreemẽt would be more easily effected, if the wife hauing been reiected by her husband, should afterward come to please him, and recouer his fauour, albeit she had married another: but when an adulterous wife finds her husband so willing and ready to pardon her; it is a very rare example, and hardly shall it be discerned in any one. We see then, how our Lord magnifies his mercy towards this people, by an argument taken from the lesse to the greater: which he the rather doth, that the Iewes might be so much the more without excuse, in that they had so obstinately reiected so great a fauour which God freely offered them.

But heere a question may be asked, namely, wherefore the Prophet saith, *That this land is polluted with pollutions*, or, *in this*? I will in the first place speake of the words, and afterwards I will dispatch the rest. All in (a manner) turne it thus; *Hath not this land been polluted with pollutions?* But in reading this place thus, I know not what sense to draw from it, vnlesse peraduenture God meant to compare the wife diuorced, to the land: or rather, that suddenly breaking off his speech, hee meant to transferre that which he had said touching the reiected wife, to the land: or at least, that hee now expounds the figure which he formerly vsed. And yet wee may take it in this sense, reading it apart thus, *In this*, to wit, if it so fall out, that some one take her for his wife the second time, who had married another. For (as we haue shewed) this was forbidden by the law: neither could it bee auoided, but the husband of such a wife must be reputed an adulterer, if he tooke her againe for his wife, whom he had once put away. For by the bill of diuorce, the woman was at liberty: not that God permitted it so to be; but because the women were guiltlesse, they were borne withall: for God laid all the fault vpon the husbands. Now in this case, when the wife who had been diuorced from her first husband, ioyned her selfe in marriage with another, this

Queſt. 1

Anſw.

second

second marrying was lawfull; so as if the first husband would recouer his wife whom he had forsaken, he therein violated and brake the faith of the second marriage. And in this sense it is the Prophet saith, that *in this*, the land shall be polluted: as if he would haue said, It is not lawfull for the husband to recall his wife to him, notwithstanding he be most ready to entertaine her into his fauour and good liking: and yet doe I (saith the Lord) expect nothing else, *but that you should returne vnto me*. As touching these words, we haue already seene how the Prophet saith not without cause, *In this*, that is to say, it would breed such confusion, if a woman should bee married now to this man, and then to another; and in conclusion, should returne againe to the first: that by meanes hereof the band of humane society and order would be broken. Moreouer, by meanes hereof the sacred band of matrimony would be violated, which notwithstanding is one of the most principall bands that men haue, to preserue and establish the right gouernment of the Common-wealth.

When he adds, *but thou hast played the harlot with many louers*, it is the better to confirme that which wee haue seene before; namely, that the people offended not in *one thing alone*, but were growne like common strumpets, who indifferently, without any choyce at all, prostitute themselues to the first customer; which is signified by these words, *many louers*; that is with many whore-masters: for he calles them companions, or louers, who seeme to sue to one woman.

Then he adds, *yet turne againe vnto me, saith the Lord:* that is, I am most ready to receiue thee to mercy, if so be thou wilt confesse thy fault. But heere may arise a question; namely, how God promiseth to doe that, which himselfe in his Law had forbidden to be done? But the solution is easie. I grant, that so farre forth as respect was to be had to the right of maintaining humane society, there was no other remedie to be giuen: but seeing men had

Quest.

Answ.

had this liberty to put away their wiues, it was not freely to be permitted without some restraint, lest so it might seeme that God meant to cherish and approue of their lightnesse and inconstancy. It was very requisite then, that wayward and peeuish husbands should be thus chastised, that it might at no hand be lawfull for them to take againe into their fellowship, the wife whom they had once put away: otherwise euery one would haue been ready to haue changed their minds euery third day, or at least, euery yeere: and then would haue been as ready (the fit being ouer) to haue demanded her againe. God himselfe therefore imposed this law vpon diuorces, that the man who had once put away his wife, might not afterward receiue her againe. But the case is otherwise in respect of God: therefore no wonder if he retaine his right and power of receiuing the Iewes againe into fauour, vpon their amendment. It follows,

Verse. 2. *Lift vp thine eyes to the high places*, that is, to the little hils or mountaines, *and behold in what place thou hast not played the harlot: thou hast sitten* waiting *for them in the wayes*, namely to allure them, *as the Arabian in the wildernesse, and thou hast polluted the land with thy whoredomes, and with thy malice.*

FOr as much as the Prophet had taxed the Iewes for such as were become common; and that they made no choyce at all who were one, so they might be the other: euen like loose strumpets, after they are growne past shame; lest they should make their replies, and also lest at any time they should alleage, that they neuer so much as meant to commit such an offence: hee makes them (as it were) *their owne iudges. Lift vp* (saith he) *thine eyes to the high places, and behold*: that is, I produce testimonies manifest enough, for there is not the least *mountaine* in the land, whereon thou hast not played the harlot with thine idols. For we haue seene before, and shall haue occasion

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oft times in this propheſie to repeat the ſame thing, that God in his ſight eſteemed ſuperſtitions as ſo many adulteries. Now it was an vſuall thing with the Iewes to aſcend vp to the tops of mountaines; as if there forſooth, they had been nearer vnto God. And this is the reaſon why the Prophet wils them *to lift their eyes vnto the mountaines. Behold* (ſaith he) *if there be any hillocke which is not infected with thy whoredomes.* For euen as leud perſons ſeeke for places that are cloſe, to commit their filthineſſe in; ſo alſo the hils ſerued the Iewes for their dens and brothell-houſes. For which cauſe alſo their impiety was ſo much the more execrable, in that they ſtucke not to proclaime to all the world what they were: as if they meant to diſcouer their villanies vpon an open theater: whereas harlots are wont to goe into corners, when they haue found their companions. Thus then, the prophet takes from them heere all occaſions of cauelling, when he bids them lift vp their eyes to the high places: for in bowing before their idols, it was all one as if an harlot had proſtituted her body to the accompliſhment of her luſt: and he adds, they *ſate waiting vpon the wayes, as the Arabian in the wildernesſe.* Heere he repeates that which we haue ſeene before; namely, that the Iewes were not ſuddenly ouertaken by the allurements and enticements of others, to falſifie the faith of marriage which they had vowed to God; but that they were pricked forward by their owne inordinate luſts, to ſeeke out impudent and filthy louers. And becauſe he had ſaid, thou haſt corrupted others by thy malice; therefore now alſo he confirms the ſame, *Thou ſitteſt* (ſaith he) *vpon all wayes.* Which ſpeech alſo agrees to filthy harlots, who (as hath been ſaid) are paſt ſhame.

Chap. 2. 33.

But the Prophet amplifies this fault by another ſimilitude: *euen* (ſaith he) *as the Arabian waits for paſſengers in the wildernesſe*, to rob and cut their throats: ſo thou alſo ſeemeſt in like manner to ſit in all thy wayes. We ſee here is a double ſimilitude then: the firſt taken from *harlots*,

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long

long exercised in that trade, who seeing themselues neglected, lurke in passages, and shamelesly insinuate themselues into mens acquaintance; and without any choyce, seaze vpon him that comes first. This is one of the similitudes. The second is, that they behaued themselues in a manner, like cut-throats, who watch for passengers: as if he had said, The Chaldeans and Egyptians are blamelesse (as it were) being compared with the Iewes. Why so? Because the Iewes allured them to become their confederates, and drew them into their wicked and cursed couenants by artificiall wiles. As if a passenger falling into theeues hands, by little and little they should corrupt him. As how? Alas! thou art but a poore snake; but if thou wilt come and make a couenant with vs, and be our companion; there is certaine hope of good successe, and that euery day will furnish vs with new booties: are not such old theeues (trow yee) thrise, yea foure times worse than this new scholer? Likewise also the prophet saith, the Iewes were all become like old experienced theeues, hardened in their mystery of ambushments, robberies, spoylings, and all sorts of lewd practices; and had now drawne the Assyrians and Egyptians into their societie. It followes.

Verse 3. *Therefore the showers haue been restrained, and the latter raine came not, and thou hadst a whores fore-head, thou wouldest not be ashamed.*

Ieremiah goes on still with his sharper reprehension; namely, that the Iewes were growne desperate in their malice, by ouerflowing in all sorts of superstitions, and in making vnlawfull couenants; and in both, shewed their contempt against God. Now hee lets vs see how farre they were sunke in an vntamed rebellion. *The showers haue been restrained* (saith he) *they haue not fallen in their latter season: and yet hadst thou for all that an whores fore-head; thou wouldest not blush, nor be ashamed:* as if hee had said, there was no iudgements that could tame thee. The fault

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was too great already, whileſt the Prophets cried daily vpon them, to bring them home into the right way, by their holy admonitions: and yet they regarded not. In that they were become ſuch dullards then, as not to conceiue ought that the Prophets vttered, it was one ſigne of their wickedneſſe. But beſides this, God had endeauoured to draw them to him by ſeuere chaſtiſements which he inflicted vpon them; hee had cauſed the earth (to puniſh their ſinnes) to become vnfruitful: neither is it to be doubted, but this *drought* whereof the Prophet ſpeakes, was ſo extraordinary, that the Iewes might well perceiue (if there had been in them but a dramme of true wiſedome) that they had prouoked Gods wrath againſt them. For ſometimes it falles out, that not ſo much as a droppe of raine ſhall fall from the heauens: as wee ſee many ſommers prooue very hote and dry: and then (no queſtion) God aduertizeth vs of our ſinnes; and thereby ſolicites vs to repentance. But becauſe cuſtome makes vs eaſily ſet light by Gods iudgements: it therefore comes to paſſe, that hee corrects vs with rare and vnwonted iudgments. When the Prophet then ſaith, that *the ſhowers were reſtrained*, I doubt not but he meant to note out an extraordinary iudgement of God; by which (had not the Iewes been altogether ſenſeleſſe) they might ſoone haue eſpied that God was bent againſt them, and ſore offended with them. The ſumme is, that the Iewes ranne ryot with ſuch fury, after their inordinate luſts, that God himſelfe could not ſtay nor hold them in, by any of his iudgements, were they neuer ſo manifeſt and apparant; no not albeit *from aboue*, he plainly teſtified, that he meant to auenge and maintaine his owne glory, when there was ſuch a drought, as by which they might well diſcerne that the curſes threatened in the Law, were powred out vpon them: as it is written, Leuit. 26.19. *I will make your heauen ouer you as iron, and your earth as braſſe.*

The ſumme.

Deut. 28.23.

As touching the Hebrew word which wee haue tranſlated

slated *raine of the latter season*: we haue elsewhere shewed, how it is often taken for the latter raine, or for the raine that falles in the time of harueſt. It is called *late*, in regard of the harueſt, for the Sunne was exceſſiuely hote in thoſe Eaſtern parts: they there needed raine before the corne was reaped, for otherwiſe the heat would conſume the graine: for which cauſe they deſire this latter raine aboue all others, namely, that which is immediately before harueſt. For as touching the other rain which fals in September, and October, they cal ỳ the raine which comes in good ſeaſon, in reſpect of the ſeed-time, becauſe it wets and ſupples the ſeed in the earth, that it may the ſooner ſprout foorth, and take the deeper and faſter rooting in the earth. The ſumme is, *that God from heauen ſhewed manifeſt ſignes of his diſpleaſure againſt the Ieweſs, and yet all this was to no purpoſe, in regard they had whoriſh Rebels*, that could not bluſh at any thing; that is to ſay, they were not touched with remorſe in reſpect of any iudgements; or they would not endure to be corrected.

The Ppayer.

Almighty God, ſeeing it hath pleaſed thee once to ſhew vs this fauour, not onely to adopt vs for thy children, but alſo to binde vs vnto thee by the bond of ſpirituall marriage, and haſt giuen vs ſo good a pledge thereof in that holy and ſacred vnion which we haue with thy onely Son Ieſus Chriſt; grant we may hold faſt the faith of the Goſpell, and alſo with ſuch fidelity and loyalty keepe that faith which wee haue plighted to thee, that on thy part thou maiſt ſhew thy ſelfe an husband and a father, in ſuch wiſe vnto vs euen vnto the end, that wee may find thy bounty ſo enlarged towards vs, that by meanes thereof we for our parts may alſo be held in the feare of thy holy name, till at the laſt we come to enter into the poſſeſſion of that holy couenant of thy heauenly kingdome, through the ſame our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. Amen.

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THE ELEVENTH LECTVRE, WHICH IS THE FIRST VPON THE third Chapter.

Vers. 4. *Wilt thou not hereafter cry vnto me, My father, the captaine and guide of my youth?*

GOd hauing manifested the iniquities and wickednesses of his people, and hauing according to their demerits, sharply reproued them; yet hee ceaseth not by sweet allurements to summon them to repentance. *Wilt thou not* (saith he) *say vnto me, My father?* Some vnaduisedly translate, Wilt thou say to me, my father? as if God reiected this cry. Thus they expound it then, namely, that the Iewes are too impudent yet, to glory thus of Gods name, whilest in their affections they were estranged from him. But the Prophets meaning is otherwise: for God meant heere to allay the tartnesse of the former reprehension; and shewes that hee is willing, *and most ready to be at one with them, vpon condition of their repentance*: yea, he not onely waites for their repentance; but by this gracious speech to these Apostataes, *he seekes to preuent them*. As how? *Shall there not bee once againe a peace concluded betweene vs?* For God heere manifests the passion of a man sad and heauie, in seeing this people thus to perish: who if possibly he could, would faine preuent the same. According to this sense hee demands, *whether they will not yet once againe call vpon him, as their father, and as the guide of their youth?* Now by this manner of speech he signifies, that he *was married with this people*. For the affection which the husband beares to a young virgin, in the flower of her youth, is maruellous tender. And this similitude

similitude God vseth in this place, saying, I cannot yet forget that exceeding loue which I bare to this my Church and people. In a word, I am ready to pardon them, if so be they seeke peace and amity with me: which he confirmes in the next verse, saying:

Vers. 5. *Will he keepe this in mind for euer? will hee alwayes remember it? Behold thou hast spoken, and goest on in thy wickednesse, and thou hast had ability.*

GOd heere shewes, that it is the Iewes fault that hee receiues them not to mercy: And this he doth by an argument taken from his owne nature. Now hee speakes of himselfe in the third person: and it is all one as if the Prophet had reasoned thus: God is not such an one as cannot be entreated; for hee is alwayes as ready to forgiue, as he is patient and long-suffering: who lets you then, that you liue not happily vnder his rule and dominion? For he will spare you, if so be he finde you truly penitent. Wee see now what the Prophet meant to say. For God hauing exhorted and allured them graciously to repentance; the Prophet now in generall sets foorth the nature of God, namely, *that he keepes not his anger for euer, neither doth he alwayes nourish the memory of it.* When these words are put simply by themselues; they signifie, to nourish vengeance in the heart. In our tongue, we imitate this Hebrew phrase, He keepes it. When this word, *To keepe*, is put simply, without an other word ioyned with it, it signifies (as I haue said) to nourish that vengeance which a man hath in his heart. Now there is nothing more repugnant to this, than Gods nature: whence it followes, that nothing hinders the Iewes from obtaining fauour, but their owne backwardnesse and vntowardnesse: and as they are maliciously bent to their will, so will they not receiue that pardon and grace which is freely offered and presented before them. *Illui garde.*

As touching that which afterwards followes, it may

be expounded two wayes: for it may be taken thus, Albeit thou haſt ſpoken it, and done it as if the Lord ſhould ſay, I ceaſe not to ſhew my ſelfe fauourable and mercifull vnto you, bee the faults you haue committed neuer ſo many and great. But there is another expoſition which ſeemes to be more naturall and agreeable; namely, that God heere takes vp a lamentation, in reſpect he ſees there is no hope to be conceiued of the Iewes amendment, in regard they are growne hardened in their euill wayes. *Thou haſt ſpoken it* (ſaith he) *and done it, and haſt had ability to doe it.*

And yet there are ſundry opinions among the expoſitors as touching theſe latter words. Some take this, And haſt had ability; for, according as thou haſt had ability; or, according to the power thou haſt had: as if he ſhould ſay, ſo farre forth as thy ability ſtretched, thou haſt committed all ſorts of wickedneſſes. Others take it more ſimply, and (as I thinke) their opinion is the beſt: Thou haſt been powerfull: that is thou haſt wholly giuen ouer thy ſelfe to wickedneſſe, euen according to the vttermoſt
1 of thy power. Thus then I vnderſtand it. After God had
2 ſhewed himſelfe ſorry for their miſeries, and had louingly
3 exhorted them to repentance, teſtifying that he would be
4 ready to make peace with them, in regard he is by nature enclined to ſhew mercy: after the manifeſtation of all theſe things, he now adds, *Behold, this people are become deſperate and paſt hope of recouery*: namely, *becauſe they boaſted of their wickedneſſe.* For, *to ſpeake, and doe,* is as much as if he had ſaid, *This people are become ſo impudent, that they ſticke not to call darkneſſe light*: as wee know it is the manner of the ſuperſtitious to bee ſo ſhameleſſe, that they feare not to braue God to his face. Now ſuch was the quality and condition of this people: that indeed which God principally condemned in them by the mouthes of his Prophets, was that they corrupted his pure worſhip commanded in his Law. But they on the contrary (like brazen-faced ſtrumpets) were ſo malepert, as

against that, to alleage their owne deuotions and good intentions, as they commonly called them. Seeing then they were growne so audacious, as to maintaine and defend their bad courses, God heere complaines, *that there is no hope of their amendment:* and therefore giues them ouer as graceleſſe and deſperate people. This is it which I conceiue touching the true and naturall meaning of this place. And to the ſame purpoſe he alſo adds, *thou* (ſaith he) *waſt able:* that is, thou ceaſedſt not to adde ſinne to ſinne, but gaueſt thy ſelfe ouer to the committing of iniquity. Now it followes.

Verſ. 6. *And the Lord ſaid to me in the dayes of King Ioſias, what hath this* lewd, or *diſdainfull Iſrael done?* others tranſlate, This rebell: *ſhee is gone vpon euery high mountaine, and vnder euery greene tree, and there hath ſhe played the harlot.*

7 *And after ſhe had done all theſe things, I ſaid, Returne vnto me.* Others tranſlate in the third perſon, Shee will returne, *and ſhe returned not, as her rebellious ſiſter Iudah ſaw.*

8 *And I ſaw that for all this,* for all theſe occaſions, or cauſes; to wit, that *rebellious Iſrael had played the harlot; I forſooke her:* I put her away, *and gaue her the bill of her diuorce: and yet her diſloyall ſiſter Iudah feared not, but ſhee went alſo and played the harlot.*

HEre the Prophet begins a new ſpeech: for he recites that which God had giuen him in charge, and withall notes *the time*; to wit, *whileſt Ioſias raigned.* Now it is well knowne, that in his dayes the land was purged from all ſorts of ſuperſtitions. For this good King endeauored to reſtore Gods pure worſhip, and to aboliſh all the filthy corruptions wherewith the Temple, and religion it ſelfe had been wholly infected and defiled. He therefore manfully imployed himſelfe in this buſineſſe: neither is it to be doubted, but as touching the outward face of things,

religion and piety then seemed to flourish: yet shall we see how in the greater part of the people, hypocrisie and counterfait holinesse beare a great sway: which often falls out, when the heads and gouernours of countreys desire to maintaine the purity of Gods worship, and to purge out the corruptions that haue crept in. For ye shall euer see some which carry a faire shew for a time; and yet in the meane while, will not sticke to continue still in their obstinacy against God. This was then the state of the Commons. Which we are diligently to obserue: because it might be thought that *Ieremiah* carried himselfe somewhat too harshly towards his nation: for reformation was in euery mans mouth: as the greater part of those at this day, who at the beginning of reformation, made goodly shewes of their readinesse to embrace the doctrine of the Gospell: and yet after they had renounced all popish superstitions, now willingly content themselues with a slight reformation, wherein they glory. But in the meane while they shift off Christs yoke, and cannot endure to be subiect to the discipline of the Church. In a word, they could wish that all order and policy were ouerthrowne. And yet for all this, as oft as they are taxed for their sinnes, they are ready to couer themselues with this faire pretext of reformation. And doubtlesse *Ieremiah* had euen such in his time to deale withall. This is the cause why he expressly notes, *that he had this commission in the dayes of Iosias*: to wit, euen then whilest the King bent himselfe to set vp Gods worship in the purity of it; and whilest none durst contradict it: for during this time wee may perceiue, that God was called vpon with one consent, without any outward superstitions.

But what is the summe of this message or ambassage? *Hast thou not seene* (saith he) *what this disdainfull Israel hath done?* God heere compares the *ten Tribes*, with *the kingdome of Iudah*: to which (as we know) was added halfe the Tribe of *Beniamin*: hee compares *Israel* then with *Iudah*, and saith, *Sirst thou not what this rebel-*

lious Israel hath done? Now he brings in the kingdome of Israel and Iudah, vnder the person of a wife. For as we haue seene heretofore, God takes vnto himselfe the person of an husband, in respect of the people. Thus then hee saith he hath had two wiues, to wit, Israel and Iudah. I grant God had married to himselfe in one marriage, the whole seed of Abraham. But Ieremiah speakes heere by way of granting them so much. For albeit the Israelites had reuolted from God, yet had he not vtterly reiected them: so the couenant held as yet in part. In this sense hee acknowledgeth, as well Israel as Iudah, for his wiues. Hee saith then, Hast thou not seene what this disdainfull Israel hath done? This word, To disdaine, or turne away, is diuersly taken by the expositors; but it may properly bee translated, lewd, or loose. See (saith hee) how shee is gone vpon euery high mountaine, and vnder euery greene tree, &c. The summe of Gods complaint heere is, That the ten tribes haue falsified the faith of this holy marriage. Why so? Because they bowed before idols; and that vpon euery high mountaine, and vnder euery greene tree. For (as we haue said) it was their custome to chuse out those places, as if there had been some holinesse vpon the tops of the mountaines, or vnder the shadow of the greene trees. Chap. 3. 1. Desbauchée.

He therewithall adds, Notwithstanding I said: Gods meaning in these words is, that he tarried long in suspending his iudgement, before he chastised the people of Israel. Heere therefore wee see the praise of his patience, not onely in not proceeding in his wrath against the Israelites; but also in that he forbare them, and for a long time held his peace, to see if they would come to amendment. I said then, after thou hadst committed all these things, returne to me. If wee reade this place in the third person, the sense will be this: I alwayes hoped well of their amendment, and that they would at length returne againe into the right way, albeit they had fallen so grosly; yea, notwithstanding they had so wickedly reiected Verſ. 7.

me, in reuolting from me, and in forsaking their faith, and and all piety. But I rather encline to the contrary opinion: namely, that God heere shewes how his purpose was to recall and bring backe the ten Tribes, by his seruants the Prophets; notwithstanding they prouoked him to wrath and iealousie. Thus then God meant heere to shew how the Israelites were bent to obstinacy and rebellion; for he did but loose his labour, though hee tooke such paines by all good meanes to bring them home to himselfe. I take this word *said* then, for the Prophets doctrine; as if he should say, *Although the Israelites were plunged (as it were) ouer head and eares in their impieties; yet left I no meanes vnattempted for all that, to see if I could cause them to returne vnto me.* In a word, he shewes how he resembled not those husbands which could neuer be brought in any sort to be reconciled with their wiues, after they haue been prouoked to iealousie, by the disgraces, and wicked outrages which haue been offered them. God hereby shewes then, that albeit the Israelites had forsaken him, yet he sent them his Prophets; yea, and himselfe also sought which way he might be at one with them: but they neuer returned.

In the next place he adds, *And when shee saw vpon all this*, to wit, *for all the whoredomes that rebellious Israel committed:* that is to say, when *the kingdome of Iudah* saw all these things. We shall see the drift of this comparison by and by. For he amplifies the wickednesse of the kingdome of Iudah, because she might easily behold all that which hath formerly been recited; yea, and a great way off, as from an high turret discerne it; and so might haue been brought to repentance: but *she saw*, howbeit without fruit. Thus then God meant to shew what obstinacy there was in the *Iewes*, who had beheld the reuolt of the ten Tribes: neither were they ignorant how sharply they had been reproued and threatened by the Prophets.

Vers. 8. And in the next verse he adds, *I haue seene.* As in the former

former verse he said, *Iudah saw* what Israel did; so now also he saith, that he *himselfe saw both the one and the other. I haue seene them.* But what is it which hee saith hee saw? namely, that Iudah also played the harlot (for I speake now of her, as of a wife) God saith then, that he was not ignorant of this. Whereof? *That Iudah* fell not by errour or ignorance; but that of malice, and of set purpose she exceeded the wickednesse of her sister Israel. Yea, *I haue seene, for all these things, when she played the harlot.* He now sets that forth more at large, which hee deliuered before in few words. He said, the Tribe of Iudah *saw*: but this, by reason of the breuity of it, might haue seemed obscure. He explaines his meaning further then, *Iudah* (saith he) *saw that I gaue her sister a bill of diuorce, because she had played the harlot; and yet this astonished her not*: that is, it neuer came into her thought to repent, though she saw so manifest an example of my wrath and vengeance, euen before her eyes. *Quest.* But heere a question may be asked, How is it said, he gaue Israel a bill of diuorce, seeing in *Isaiah*, chap. 50. vers. 1. he flatly denies it? *Answ.* But the Prophet speakes heere in another sense, than hee doth in that place of *Isaiah*. For hee mentions not heere that bill of diuorce which husbands were wont to giue their wiues, when they meant to put them away; who in other respects had carried themselues chastly and well: but he speakes of such a diuorce as was approued of by the Law; to wit, when the woman being conuinced of adultery was condemned to death. God therfore in *Isaiah* denies that he had giuen any bill of diuorce; and yet heere he saith *he gaue one*: that is, *because he had put away a wife taken in adultery.* I grant this was not ordinarily practiced among the Iewes at that time; namely, that a man being diuorced himselfe from an adulterous wife, she was by and by called to iudgement. But wee haue seene in the beginning of this Chapter, what difference there is betweene God, and womens husbands. For as much then as God had not dealt rigorously with the Israelites,

raelites, neither had inflicted vpon them those extreame punishments which they had iustly deserued, and also according to the custome then in vse; therefore he saith, *hee gaue her a bill of diuorce*; that is to say, he separated himselfe from this people, and vtterly forsooke them. In the meane while *by the bill of diuorce*, he vnderstands *their banishment*. For when the ten Tribes were led into captiuity, it was all one as if God had openly protested that hee would no longer hold his couenant or coniunction at all with this people. Truly, whilest they dwelt in the holy land, and in the inheritance which he had promised them, there remained alwayes some resemblance of this holy wedlock: but after they were once scattered heere and there, and that Gods true worship had no more any place among them; in a word, after the name of the kingdome of Israell was once abolished, then God made this diuorce.

What is meant by diuorce in this place.

Her sister Iudah then, *saw*, (saith he) *and yet shee feared not*. Now what an exceeding great senselessnesse was this, not to become wise by the harmes of another? But this complaint is often met withall in the Prophets, namely, that when God spared the Iewes, they were neuer moued thereby to repentance, albeit God set such examples before their eyes, as might haue been sufficient to haue terrified them. For might they not well thinke (or at least they ought so to haue done) that God would certainly shew himselfe their Iudge, in punishing so many crimes whereby they had prouoked him, seeing hee spared not (the Israelites) their brethren? They saw that poore kingdome, rooted out and abolished, before their eyes: and yet they came all out of one and the same stocke, to wit, *Abraham*, who was father to them both. How was it possible then, that they should make so little reckoning of Gods iudgements, which had so long a time been exercised vpon their brethren in their sight? He saith then, *that they feared not*. It followes.

Vers. 9.

Vers. 9. *And by her haſtineſſe it is come to paſſe:* other of the expoſitors as well as Saint Ierome, tranſlate, Eaſineſſe. The Hebrew word whence it is deriued, ſometimes ſignifies ſwiftneſſe: but heere it notes lightneſſe, or wantonneſſe; which the Prophet reprooues. It came to paſſe then, *by the lightneſſe*, or wantonneſſe *of her whoredomes, that ſhe polluted the land*, or defiled it: other tranſlate, ſhe made the land ſinne: but Saint Ierom almoſt euery where tranſlates this word, To defile; neither ſutes it amiſſe heere: *and ſhe played the harlot with ſtocker and ſtones.*

THe Prophet heere (and in the two next verſes) concludes his ſpeech which he began, in verſ. 6. namely, it was ſo farre off from ſtriking a terrour into Iudah, by the puniſhments which God had inflicted vpon Iſrael, that rather by her *lightneſſe and looſe life*, ſhe ſurmounted all the whoredomes of her ſiſter. *She hath* (ſaith he) *defiled the land*; or, ſhe hath cauſed it to ſinne: that is to ſay, ſhe hath made the land wicked. Now this ſerues to aggrauate the fault much, when he ſaith, *that the land was made culpable*; or, that it was defiled. For we know that the earth of it ſelfe is pure and cleane: neither is it apt to draw into it any ſpot or vice from mens impiety. But to the end the impiety of her inhabitants might be made ſo much the more odious and deteſtable: it is ſaid, *the earth* is defiled; therefore he ſaith, *the land* is guilty. Wherfore? The reaſon why the land is defiled, or is made wicked, or wrapped in their ſinnes is added, to wit, *becauſe ſhe played the harlot with ſtockes and ſtones.* As touching this ſimilitude of whoredome heere mentioned, we need no more to explaine it: ſeeing from the beginning wee haue ſo often repeated it: for God had entred into couenant with this people, and had vnited himſelfe vnto them by the holy bond of marriage: therfore as oft as they turned aſide frō his pure worſhip, it is rightly ſaid that they *committed whoredome*, becauſe they corrupted and violated their faith.

faith. For herein consists the true spirituall chastity, when we keep faith in al simplicity: as on the cõtrary, Apostasie is an impudent disloyalty, when the wife deceiues her husband, in following adulterers. It followes.

The true spirituall chastity.

Vers. 10. *And yet for all these things, this her disloyal,* or deceitfull, *sister Iudah returned not vnto me with her whole heart, but fainedly, saith the Lord.*

HE goes on still with the same matter, to wit, that the Iewes were not moued at all with any feare, in beholding the horrible vengeance of God, which fell vpon their brethren. *Her disloyall sister* (saith he) *returned not vnto me*: that is, *after all those prophetical admonitions and warnings*; nor yet after the examples of so many of my iudgements as happened in their sight. Notwithstanding he adds a correction, *that she returned not wholly, but fainedly*, or, lyingly. For the Prophet preuents some replies which the Iewes might make. What? *Darest thou affirme that we haue not turned: hath not the land been purged from all idolatries? Is not God now serued according to the prescript forme of his Law? Seest thou now any Altar, either vpon the tops of the mountaines, or vnder the shadow of greene trees?* For as much then as they might cauill thus cunningly, according to their ordinary custome, the Prophet preuents them, and saith, *that notwithstanding all their goodly shewes and semblances of repentance, all was nothing but a meere counterfeiting*, how to lye and dissemble with God. Why so? *There was no integrity in them.* Now we see more plainly why expresse mention hath been made, in vers. 6. of the dayes of *Iosias*: namely, because then the Iewes seemed to returne vnto God, but it was onely fainedly, and in dissimulation (the King, and a small remnant which came thereunto with vprightnesse of heart exempted) for as touching the multitude, they were rank hypocrites. Therfore the Lord in these sixe verses shewes, *that hee rested not in this reformation, which was so*

See what was said vers. 6. of this Chap.

God lookes not so much to outward reformation of religion, as to the integrity and vprightnesse of the heart.

full

full of fained holinesse; but requireth a sound and vpright affection of the heart. And therefore he concludes,

Vers. 11. *And the Lord said vnto me, this poore rebellious Israel hath iustified her soule, in comparison of this deceitfull,* or disloyall *Iudah.*

NOw (as I take it) wee clearly vnderstand wherefore *Ieremiah compared the ten Tribes, with the kingdomes of Iudah*; euen that he might manifest to the Iewes (who notwithstanding would be held much more perfect and holy than others) that they were much worse, and more disloyall; yea, and worthy of greater punishments than others, *in regard all the faire shewes they made before God, were nothing but meere deceit and lies.* But one may heere aske, Why is it said the Iewes were worse than the Israelites, seeing they alwayes continued in some tolerable estate? It is most certaine that the kingdome of Iudah was so profaned, that (in a manner) there was no forme of true religion left: yet the Temple and the sacrifices alwayes remained in Ierusalem. But there are other reasons wherefore the Prophets condemne the Iewes aboue the Israelites, namely, because they ought to haue been warned by other mens harmes, and should haue kept their owne stedfastnesse, by seeing their brethrens defection, in erring (as they did) from Gods pure worship. They might easily then, haue considered of all these things with themselues on this wise. God therefore shewes then, that they were more wicked than others, in respect of this carelesnesse and senselesnesse, together with their pride, which made vp the measure of their condemnation, because they gloried of their integrity, whilest the Israelites had corrupted themselues. This is the cause then, why he saith, that how disloyall soeuer Israell hath been, *yet she is more righteous than her sister Iudah.*

Quest.

Answ. 1

2

Why the Iewes are taxed for greater sinners than the Israelites.

1

2

The manner of speech which he vseth; *hath iustified her soule,* is improper. For it is not Gods purpose to excuse the

the Israelites, neither is it his meaning to iustifie or absolue them, (for beleeue me they were grieuously punished) but it is a phrase of speech vsuall with the Prophets, to say, *that Sodome is iust in respect of Ierusalem: that Tyre and Sydon are iust in respect of the Iewes*, Ezech. 16. 37. 38. *This sinner* then, or rebellious *Israel hath iustified her soule, in comparison of disloyall Iudah:* to wit, in regard of the cause which I before recited: namely, in that the Iewes were more obstinate, and lesse excusable. The outward worship of God which they retained, ought to haue bin as a bridle to restraine and keepe them within compasse. Besides, they had seene how seuerely God had handled the ten Tribes; and yet they cared for none of these things, neither did any of these things profit them a whit.

1

2

The Prayer.

Lord God, and Almighty Father, seeing it hath pleased thee to adopt vs for thy people, and to knit vs to the person of thine onely Sonne; grant we may continue pure and sincere in the obedience of thy Gospell, and that we neuer turne backe againe to those corruptions which may separate vs from this so sacred a coniunction, established and confirmed in vs by no lesse price than the blood of thine onely Sonne: but grant wee may so persist in thy seruice, that our liues and conuersations may be witnesses to that holy vocation wherein our hope rests satisfied that we haue eternall saluation; till at the length wee come to the inheritance of that kingdome, which hath been so dearly purchased for vs, therein to gather and reape the fruit of our faith, integrity, and perseuerance, in the same Iesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

LECT.

THE TWELFTH LECTVRE, WHICH IS THE SECOND VPON THE third Chapter.

Vers. 12. *Goe, and cry*, that is to say, with full mouth sound forth *all these words towards the North, and say: Thou disobedient Israel, saith the Lord, returne vnto me, I will not cause to rest*, word for word it is, I will not let fall, *my wrath*: others translate, my face; but by a similitude it signifies wrath, *vpon you, because I am mercifull, saith the Lord, I will not alwayes retaine it.*

AFter the Prophet hath shewed how the Tribe of Iudah deserued to bee more seuerely punished than the ten Tribes, and also added the reason of it; to wit, because they saw before their eyes what chastisements had been inflicted vpon them; and yet without any remorse as on their parts: hee now directs his speech *to the Israelites* themselues, *or to the ten Tribes; and promiseth that God will now be mercifull vnto them, and bow his eares to their prayers.* The kingdome of Israel at this time was abolished, and the people thereof led captiue; some of them into Assyria, and some of them among those of the Medes and Persians; so as they were in such wise dispersed, that no memory at all was left of that kingdome. As touching the countrey, it had often been wasted before. For from the beginning, there yet remained some part of the kingdome; in regard foure Tribes onely were carried away into captiuity: but in the end, the memory of the kingdome was vtterly abolished, and (as I haue said) led into captiuity. See why the Prophet then is commanded to direct

direct his speech *towards the North*. For albeit the most of them were then in the East; yet God chiefly respects that place which was the most eminent in all the Empire, in regard they had been wasted by the Assyrians. This is the cause why the Lord bids his Prophet *cry these words* to them whom the enemy had carried into the North parts. *Cry* then (saith he) not onely *because the distance of place was very great*; but also in regard *the Israelites themselues, who now were become deafe, might heare and vnderstand these words*. Moreouer, the Prophet had not this charge giuen him onely in respect of the Israelites; but in their example he sets the mercy of God also before the Iewes, if so be they would returne. The summe is this, *that although the Israelites had been rebellious, and had estranged themselues from God; yet they might now obtaine pardon if they would conuert*. We told you before (in a word) what the Prophet meanes by this word *conuersion*, or returning, and we shall also haue occasion to mention it againe in another place. *He would they should repent then*, promising, that if they so doe, they shall find God fauourable vnto them.

Reasons why the Prophet was commanded to cry.

1

2

3

The summe. Vers. 7.

In the next place he adds, *I will not cause my fatherfall*, or my wrath, *vpon you*: and this latter exposition agrees best. God had seuerely chastised their sinnes already: for what greater euill could befall them, than to bee expulsed the land of their nativity, and to be subiect to such cruell tyrants? But that which was worst of all, they were depriued of Gods pure worship, which himselfe had ordained in his Law, they were reiected of God himselfe: they had lost that glory and prerogatiue, whereby they esteemed themselues more excellent than any people in the world besides. For they were chosen indeed to bee his peculiar people: but now all this was gone. How is it then, that God saith, *he will no more let his wrath fall vpon them*? The Prophet simply meanes by this manner of speech, *that God will not be vnreconcileable*: as if he should say, *My wrath shall not continue*; or, *it shall not alwayes fall*

beause

heauie vpon you; but I will moderate the afflictions wherewith I haue exercised you. I therefore mislike not Saint *Ieroms* translation [I will not stay] albeit he vseth this word, To make; which yet (as I haue said) doth not sufficiently expresse the Prophets meaning. But this will bee a good exposition, if we reade, *I will not let my wrath rest vpon you:* that is to say, My wrath shall not tary or abide; or, it shall not lie heauie vpon your heads, vtterly to ouerwhelme you. *The wrath of God I grant was already fallen vpon them; yet so, that they were not left hopelesse of some reliefe.* God then saith, that the plagues which hee had brought vpon them for their sinnes, should not be mortall. Why so? Because he would withdraw his hand, and not prosecute them to the vttermost with extremity. The summe is, *That if the people shall returne vnto God, they shall obtaine fauour, in regard God is moued of his owne good pleasure to call them to himselfe, and promiseth that the iudgement he hath sent vpon them shall last but for a while.* The summe.

And God once againe confirmes this doctrine, *from an argument taken from his owne nature: For I* (saith he) *am mercifull; neither will I retaine my wrath for euer.* The promise was particular in respect of the peoples returne out of captiuity: now that he might confirme the same, hee adds a generall doctrine, namely, *That he is enclined to mercy:* and according as he is wholly bent thereunto, so will he easily be drawne to forgiue. *Seeing God then is such an one, and therefore cannot deny himselfe; what cause haue sinners to despaire, thereby shutting vp the gate (as it were) against themselues, from hauing any accesse at all to Gods mercy?* Hence then we may gather a good and profitable doctrine. What is that? *As often as we are solicited to despaire, and are not able to apply vnto our selues Gods gracious promises; that we then euer remember that God is mercifull.* Doct.

Seeing God then is so gracious, that hee retaines not his wrath for euer; that is to say, it lasts but for a moment: we ought alwayes to nourish good hope in our breasts: as is also said in the 30. Psalme: *Hee continues but a* Mich 7. 18. Psal. 62 12.

while in his anger; but in his fauour is life. As if hee should say, Gods wrath forthwith vanisheth, if we for our parts repent: but he continues on his mercy and goodnesse to many ages: for that is it which hee meanes by this word *life*. Now it followes.

Vers. 13. *Onely*, or, notwithstanding, *know thine iniquity; for thou hast wickedly sinned against the Lord thy God, and hast spread abroad*, or scattered, *thy waies to the strangers vnder euery greene tree, and hast not harkened to my voyce, saith the Lord.*

GOd heere adds to his promise *a condition*, lest hypocrites abusing his bounty, should thereby grow more and more hardened; and yet in the meane while should thinke he were much beholding to them. For see how they are wont vsually to reason, God is easily drawn to call vs backe againe to himselfe: and more than that, he preuents sinners: well, we doubt not, but wee shall as easily make faire weather with him. After this sort doe hypocrites delude themselues with these peruerse imaginations, because they falsly suppose they can satisfie God with any thing: for he lookes for no more at the hands of poore sinners, than that they come againe vnto him. *It is necessary therefore that exhortations to repentance bee alwayes coupled with the promises of grace.* God then admonisheth the Israelites heere, that they shall much deceiue themselues, if they thinke to obtaine pardon so easily for the sinnes they they haue committed against him. He saith then, *But know thine iniquity*. The particle vsed in the Hebrew, may signifie, *onely*; or *but*; or *notwithstanding*. I willingly receiue the second exposition, because there is an exception heere added, according as I haue expounded it; namely, that the Israelites should not lie snoring in their sinnes, as perswading themselues that they had God in their sleeue (as they say) or as if he were at their becke and command. Thus then we see the Prophet adds this

Doct.

exception

exception heere, by way of a correction. *But in the meane while* (saith he) *know thine iniquity: for otherwise thou hast no reason to seeke reconciliation with me.*

It followes. *For thou hast carried thy selfe wickedly against the Lord thy God.* The Prophet by these words *presseth the Israelites home*, lest they should thinke to escape Gods wrath by their faire and colourable pretexts. For we know, *that even such as feele themselues inwardly convinced, are not easily brought to confesse their faults.* And surely it is wonderful, men should be so blockish, thus to plead alwayes with God. Therefore when the Prophets goe about to exhort the Iewes to repentance, they alwayes *set their sinnes before them.* Were there any shame, or good nature in men, they needed not to bee thus pressed: but in regard they are either impudent, and so will neuer confesse their faults; or so senseleſſe, that nothing can terrifie them: therefore it is needfull they should bee thus sharply gauled; yea deeply wounded. This course the Prophet takes heere. *Thou hast* (saith hee) *carried thy selfe wickedly towards thy God:* as if the Prophet should haue said, It is not without cause, that in this particular manner I admonish thee to acknowledge thy faults: for it is God himselfe that condemnes thee; thinke not therfore that thy euasions can doe thee any good. 1 2

In the next place (to presse them yet nearer to the quicke) he adds *the kind of fault* wherein they failed, *Thou hast* (saith he) *scattered*, or dispersed *thy wayes to strangers, vnder euery greene tree.* Againe, he compares the Israelites to harlots, which are so common to all, that they post from place to place to entertaine the first commers. See how the Prophet saith, the Israelites had *scattered* their wayes. He speakes modestly of an immodest action, when he saith, *thou hast scattered thy wayes*: but by these words he signifies, that they satisfied not themselues with one kind of superstition, or with one idoll, but polluted themselues with *sundry superstitions*; and that on euery side they heaped together diuers deceitfull errours; euen *From the generall, the Prophet proceeds to charge them with particulars.*

as a common harlot prostitutes her selfe to such as shee neuer knew before, without any choyce at all.

Now all fained gods, he termes by the name of strangers; because (as I haue often said) *they ought to haue held God for their husband.* Whilest the Israelites then, wandred thus after *strange gods*, it was all one as if a wife, forsaking the company of her husband, should prostrate, or prostitute her selfe to the will of all adulterers. And wee know nothing is more vsuall, than for those that forsake the true seruice of God, to gather to themselues, from all parts, sundry deceits and errours, so as they prostitute themselues without any restraint, before all sorts of superstitions.

In the last place he adds, *and thou hast not heard my voice.* By this circumstance the Prophet amplifies their offence; namely, that hauing *been instructed* by the doctrine of the Law, and therefore could not be ignorant of the right way to saluation: how was it possible they should thus foully corrupt themselues, by entertaining such variety of superstitions? They could not say, ignorance was the cause of it: it was their open rebellion then against God. Thus the Prophet shewes they were disobedient, and had no stay of themselues at all: and that hence came their falling away into idolatry and peruerse errours; namely, *they had shaken off Gods yoke, and would not endure to be gouerned by his word.* Now wee haue the summe and scope of all these words. In the first place God wils the Israelites *to confesse their sinnes*: which if they performe, he shewes *what gaine they shall get by their conuersion*; which he mentioned erewhile. For, till the sinner acknowledge his faults, he will neuer become a true conuert, neither will he from his heart turne vnto God. The beginning of repentance therfore, is to acknowledge and confesse our sinnes. Moreouer, hee conuinceth them of their sinnes, that he might take from them all occasions of cauelling. Thirdly, *he names the kind of sinne*, that hee might hold them (as it were) at a bay: to wit, that they

The summe and scope of the whole 12. and 13. verses.

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Vers. 12.

Note.

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were defiled with superstitions. And moreouer he adds, that they were not onely like to an adultereſſe, that forſakes another husband, *but to the filthy of ſeums of the world*, who poſt hither and thither, without reſpect either of thoſe they know, or know not. Laſtly he ſhewes, that this came to paſſe *meerly by their owne rebellion*; namely, becauſe they had wholly ſhaken off all feare and reuerence of God, in regard he had committed to their cuſtody *the oracles of his Law*: beſides, they had alſo *the Prophets*, whom he had ſent to be the true expoſitors thereof. They were therefore ſufficiently taught and inſtructed in that which concerned the will of God; and alſo how to haue walked in the right way. Whence came it then, that they ſo groſly erred? *They ſtopped their eares* againſt that word of God which was preached vnto them; and would not endure to bee guided and gouerned by the ſame, but grew vtterly vnteachable. Let vs proceed.

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Verſ. 14. *Returne ye diſobedient children, ſaith the Lord, for I am your husband*, or, I haue ruled ouer you, as ſome tranſlate: others, I haue been wearied by you: wee will ſpeake of the proprietie of the word anon. *And I will gather you one of a city, and two of a family*, or, out of a kindred, or Tribe; *and I will bring you to Sion*.

IEremiah reiterates the ſame ſentence with that in verſ. 12. enriching other words. But by heaping vp ſo many words to one purpoſe, *God ſhewes, how ready hee is to be appeaſed, aſſoone as his Iſrael ſhall from their hearts*, and without faining *come and runne vnto him*. It ſufficed to haue aſſured them in one word, that God teſtified his willingneſſe to pardon them. But perceiuing how ſlow and dull of hearing they were, and how hardly drawne to yeeld themſelues obedient, he continues on his former exhortation. This fauour of God is not to be a little admired: who albeit his grace be (in a manner) neglected, yea reiected of many by their ſlothfulneſſe, yet ceaſeth hee not;

No small fauour of God, when he offers vs conditions of peace, againe and againe.

Doct.

but *once, twise, yea the third time*, he calles vs to him. Is any man in the world able to brooke such an indignity, as to see his fauour scorned? And yet wee see God flies not backe at the first repulse, neither reiects he those by and by who are thus dull and slow of hearing; *but sets vpon them afresh*, to see if at length he may preuaile: and is not this more than necessary? For such a blockishnesse is in our nature, that if God should not daily bee calling vpon vs, how many of vs would giue him audience, or entertaine his admonitions? It is no wonder than, if he support our slothfulnesse, in summoning and calling vs *the second and third time*, to repentance: which mercy (as we see) he daily exerciseth in the Churches. This is the cause then, why the Prophet repeats the same words againe, *Returne now againe, O ye disobedient children.* He said before, Thou disobedient Israel returne. Now heere he adds, *For I haue been a husband vnto you.*

Vers. 12.

Some thinke the word *Baal*, which is heere vsed, signifies, to be sent; but this signification in this place cannot agree: therefore where others translate, I haue had domination and lordship ouer you; it agrees better: but this lordship must not be vnderstood generally. For after the Latines, this domination is referred to the husband, who is the wiues head. Neither is it to bee doubted, but God still continues his former speech, and persists in the same similitude of marriage, often mentioned before. For he accused the Israelites of adulteries, in regard they had forsaken him: which is the cause he now adds, *And yet I am your husband.* He said before, that if any man had put away his wife, and that shee should marry another, the first would neuer after be reconciled to her: but contrariwise, I willingly forgiue all your disloyalty and whoredomes; onely hereafter carry your selues chastly towards me, and you shall finde that I also will keepe my faith with you. In like manner he saith heere, *I am your husband*: that is to say, Albeit I haue put you away. For hee told them before, that hee gaue them a bill of diuorce,

See vers. 1.

See vers. 8.

and that

that is, he had (as it were) by a publike and autenticke instrument testified, that he had cast them off, and that he neuer meant afterwards to be ioyned vnto them againe in any couenant: for their exile was a kind of diuorce. Now he saith, *I am your husband:* for howsoeuer you haue by the breach of your faith, much offended me, yet doe I still continue my first plea, *I am your husband.* We now vnderstand the Prophets drift and meaning: otherwise the Israelites might haue bin so forestalled with dispaire, that they would vtterly haue distasted this fauourable accesse, whereunto the Prophet calles and exhorts them. To the end that slauish feare then should not hinder their returne, God heere tels them, hee will be their husband; neithe r will he forget that first couenant and coniunction, which in former time hee vouchsafed to make with them. Thus you see the summe of his speech, *I haue once loued you with an husband-like affection: true it is, you haue estranged your selues from me: yet returne now againe vnto me, for I am ready to pardon you; and I will receiue you againe* (saith he) *as if you had alwayes kept your faith and loyalty with me.* *The summe.*

But after he adds, *one out of a City, two out of a family.* This place is well worthy our obseruation: for God therin sheweth, that they must not tarry one for another; moreouer, *though all the body of the people generally should rot in the filthinesse of their sinnes,* yet if there were *but one* that would returne vnto him, he would alwayes be ready *to entertaine that one into his fauour.* Now this poynt was of exceeding great vse. For Gods couenant was made to the whole seed of *Abraham* in generall; and therefore they might thinke with themselues, that this couenant was vtterly abolished, *vnlesse the whole people of God* were againe gathered together. Neither had God indeed chosen to himselfe out of this race, *one or two*; no, not an hundred, nor a thousand: for hee had chosen *the whole of-spring of Abraham.* Now because this promise was common to them all generally without any exception, *God hath mercy in store, if onely one will accept thereof.*

tion; euery one might thus conceit in himselfe, But what haue I to doe with God, further than as in respect that I am descended of the race of *Abraham*? *It is not I alone then, for we are all of vs the children of Abraham.* And yet I see scarce one *that returnes to God*: it is of necessity then, that I must likewise perish with the rest of the people. Lest such a cogitation as this then, should haue any way hindred or kept backe the godly; therefore hee saith, *I will take one out of a City, and two out of a family*: that is to say, albeit there comes to me but *one onely, out of a City*, yet *that one* shall find the gate open: if only *two out of a Tribe* repaire vnto me, I will also entertaine them likewise. Now we vnderstand the Prophets meaning.

I grant the expositors vnderstand these words, *one of a City*, as if God would not refuse to pardon three or foure, although all the multitude besides perished. But they touch not the maine matter which was chiefly intended: to wit, that God restraines his speech to *two or three*, because (as hath been said) they might bee in perplexitie when they should thinke with themselues, that all generally were chosen to bee a people consecrated vnto God.

Vse. The fruite and benefit of which doctrine appertaines also euen to vs at this day. For we see many which are so foolish to exclude themselues from all hope of saluation, or at least lay such stumbling blockes in their owne way, that they dare not come neere, in regard one so gazeth vpon another, that the multitude stumbles euery one in particular. How comes it to passe that there are so many in the papacie, who with a seuled obstinacy resist God? Is it not because they thinke to escape among the multitude? Yea euen amongst our selues, we see how one hinders another. Therefore it behooues vs alwayes to remember this doctrine; namely, when God stretcheth forth his armes, it is not onely to receiue the whole multitude together, if with one consent they yeeld vnto him; but as well to gather, if it bee *but two or three* that shall

come to him out of a City, or out of the whole people. He adds:

And I will bring you to Sion. This hath been once spoken of before: thus God would giue them to vnderstand, that their exile should last but for a while, and that the Israelites should once againe recouer their inheritance, if he may perceiue in them a true and sound conuersion.

Vers. 15. *And I will giue you pastors according to mine owne heart, and they shall feed you with knowledge and* * *vnderstanding*: that is, with knowledge and wisedome.

* or wisedome.

God here promiseth he will in such wise prouide for the good and welfare of the people after their returne out of their banishment, that they shall not thenceforth bee in danger to fall into the like ruine. For the cause why God executed this vengeance is to be obserued; which also is specified by *Isaiah*, in chap. 5. The reason (saith hee) why my people *are led captiue, is onely for want of knowledge:* Therefore hell hath enlarged her soule, or throat. He saith then, that the reason why the people perished, was because knowledge perished, and that their pastors were become dumb dogs, or else were like theeues and cut-throats. But heere God on the contrary testifies, that he will giue them *good and faithfull shepheards*, who shall discharge their functions diligently. I grant that vnder this word *Pastors, is also comprehended godly and faithfull Magistrats: but heespecially notes the Prophets and Priests*, whose office it was to reforme the false worship.

Isa. 5. 13.

Isa. 56. 10. 11.

Whence we gather, *that the state of the Church cannot long endure, where there wants faithfull pastors to teach the way of saluation.* See then wherein the saluation of the Church consists, euen in this; when it pleaseth God to raise vp true pastors and teachers, to publish and set forth the doctrine of life and saluation. But where people are destituted and deprived of such as should teach them faithfully, there they must needs goe to ruine. For question-

Doct. 1.

The Church cannot long stand, where good teaching is wanting.
Prou. 29. 18.

onlesse

vnlesse God by this promise meant to signifie, that his people should not onely be freed by restoring them out of their captiuity; but also that they should be safely kept in a good estate after their reentrance into their countrey. Whence it followes, *that the Church is not onely begotten by meanes of holy and sincere pastors, but that the life thereof is also nourished, vpheld and preserued by them, euen vnto the end.* For as it is not enough that the politicall estate be once erected, vnlesse good Magistrates doe successiuely second one another in the execution of their office: so cannot a worse plague light vpon the Church, than when God depriues her of her faithfull pastors. It is true indeed, that the people can neuer returne vnto God, vnlesse he first of all send his Prophets to teach: but God speaks heere of that continued course, or tenor of his doctrine, and of a gouernment rightly composed: as if hee should say, I will not only giue you Prophets, who shall reduce you from your errours, that you may take the direct way to me, and so to saluation; but *I will also continually furnish you with faithfull pastors, which shall leade you on forward to the end.* It is also to be obserued, that none can execute the office of teaching aright, vnlesse therewithall they be endowed with *wisedome.* Now God closely intimates his fatherly loue, when he saith, *the pastors shall bee according to his heart.* It followes.

Doct. 2.

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Simile.

A worse plague canot befall the Church, than to be destituted of faithfull pastors.

Vers. 16. *And after you shall be multiplied and encreased,* or augmented, *in the land, in those dayes saith the Lord, they shall no more say, the Arke of the Lords Couenant: neither shall it come any more to mind,* or ascend into the heart, *neither shall it be remembred, neither shall they visit it any more, neither shall that be done any more.*

THe expositors are heere grauelled, in regard scarcely any one of them hath attained the Prophets meaning. The greater part of the Iewes forge I know not how many fictions heere, nothing to the purpose, and yet they

they labour to fetch that farre enough off too: namely, that they ſhould no more carry with them the Arke of the couenant into battaile. Why ſo? Becauſe no enemie ſhould afterwards inuade them. Their opinion then is, that there is promiſed to the people in this place, a quiet and ſecure ſtate, becauſe they ſhall no more need to carry the Arke of the Couenant hither and thither, to diſcomfit the aſſaults of the enemy withall. But wee may eaſily ſee, that theſe words will not at any hand beare this ſenſe. Others ſay, this muſt be referred to the time of the Meſſias: neither indeed doth any one of the Iewes deny this, in regard it followes afterwards, in verſ. 18. that the Iſraelites ſhall returne with the tribe of Iudah. Which hitherto was not accompliſhed: whence it followes, that the Prophet heere propheſieth of the kingdome of Chriſt: and yet the Iewes in confeſſing this, thinke nothing at all heere of the abrogation of ceremonies. Notwithſtanding, all the Chriſtian expoſitors (in a manner) fauour this opinion: namely, that the Prophet meant to teach, that when Chriſt ſhall appeare, the ſhadowes and ceremonies of the Law ſhall then in ſuch wiſe ceaſe, that there ſhall be no more vſe of the Arke of the Couenant, in regard the fulneſſe of the God-head ſhould dwell in Chriſt. And who would not iudge, but that this expoſition had ſome good likelihood of truth? But yet I thinke this comes nothing neere the Prophets meaning. For he ſpeakes expreſly heere, of that diſcord or diuorce which had now a long time continued betweene the kingdome of Iudah, and the kingdome of Iſrael: for albeit the kingdome of 1
Iſrael flouriſhed moſt, both in reſpect of the multitudes 2
of their men, and the large extent of their dominion; as 3
alſo in regard of their abundance of riches; and that for theſe conſiderations they were to be preferred farre before the kingdome of Iudah: yet in ſome reſpects the kingdome of Iudah was to bee preferred far before them. For firſt, they had among them the Temple, which had 1
been built by the expreſſe commandement of the Lord;

the

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Whence that emulation sprang, which so long continued betweene these two kingdomes.

the place also wherein it was built, was of his owne chusing: besides, they had with them the Arke of the Couenant, which was a pledge of his presence. Hence grew the emulation and debate betweene the kingdome of Iudah, and the ten Tribes. The Israelites they swelled in regard of their multitudes, both of men, and riches, with other carnall respects: on the other side, the Iewes gloried in their Temple, and in the Arke of the Couenant. Now what saith the Prophet to all this? *He affirmes, there shal be such an agreement betweene the two kingdomes, of Iudah & Israel; that the Iewes shal no more twit their brethren the Israelites in the teeth with the Arke of the Couenant, and the Temple of the Lord. Why so? Because God should bee equally neare, and alike fauourable to both.* And this which I haue said, the Prophet in the verses following doth yet more strongly confirme: necessarily therefore must the other two verses which follow be ioyned with this. Hee saith then,

The summe and naturall sense of this verse.

Vers. 17. *In that time they shall call Ierusalem the seate or throne of the Lord; and all nations shall come vnto it, vnto the name of the Lord, which is in Ierusalem; and afterwards they shall not walke after the hardnesse,* others translate, obstinacy; sometimes it also signifies thought, *of their wicked heart.*

1 2 3 Vers. 18. *In those dayes the house of Iudah shall goe with the house of Israel, and shall come together out of the land of the North, into the land which I haue giuen your fathers for an inheritance;* or, which I gaue your Fathers to possesse by the right of inheritance.

1 HEre are set down more clearly confirmed, which I said before: to wit, that the Prophet promiseth, there shall be a good harmony and agreement betweene the two houses of Iudah and Israel, after God shall be pleased to bring them both together out of their exile: which (he saith) in the fulnesse of time shall far exceed that

which

which it was before. Why so? In regard the posterity of *Abraham* was (as it were) scattered and dispersed: for the people whom the Lord meant to maintaine in brotherly concord (with an holy and inuiolable band) had been notwithstanding wofully diuided and rent in sunder one from another: for we know there was a deadly fude betweene these two houses. In regard then, there had been for a season such, and so shamefull *a rent*, betweene the children of *Abraham*; the Prophet shewes, *what fruit shall ensue vpon their banishment and captiuity*: to wit, *They hauing been chastised with a temporary punishment by the Lord: they should returne againe into their country, not to liue there as in former times, in such discords and hatreds; but to call vpon on: God together, with one mouth*: that is to say, *the Iewes carrying themselues as brethren to the Israelites, and the Israelites holding brotherly amity and vnity with the tribe of Iudah.* *See verſ. 16.*

The Prayer.

Almighty God, seeing it pleaseth thee so graciously, daily to support vs, notwithstanding we haue not ceased more and more, euery manner of way to prouoke thee to displeasure against vs; grant we may no longer harden our hearts against thy chastisements; but whilest thou spares vs, let thy patience prouoke vs to confesse and acknowledge our sinnes, and let thy corrections also become profitable vnto vs; that by meanes hereof we may without fayning so conuert vnto thee, that the whole course of our life may testifie that our hearts are indeed changed. Moreouer, grant we may so draw on one another; so as with one consent we may yeeld obedience to thy blessed word, and that euery one of vs in particular may study to set forth thy glory, through Iesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE

THE THIRTEENTH LECTVRE, WHICH IS THE THIRD VPON THE third Chapter.

The exposition of the two former verses is still continued.

YEsterstay we began to shew in what sense the Prophet saith, that the Arke of the Lords couenant should be no more mentioned, after the Israelites returne into their owne countrey; and that they shall be there multiplied and encreased; namely, because that dissension which was once betweene them before their captiuity, should now vtterly cease. For we know that the Israelites had their manner of seruing God apart by themselues, in regard they had forsaken the pure and sound doctrine of the Law. The Prophet meant then to shew, *that all of them should become the true seruants of God, and that there should be such vnity of faith amongst them, that the Iewes and Israelites should no more serue God after diuers fashions.* And that is the cause why hee adds, *it shall no more come into their heart*: that is to say, It shall no more be thought on. *Neither shall it bee remembred*: that is, *there shall remaine no more signes of differences and discord, as in times past. Neither shall they visit it*: that is, those who heretofore desired to offer sacrifice to God, shall no more come to Ierusalem by stealth. In a word, *the case shall be quite and cleane altered from that it was before, for in that time Ierusalem shall bee called the throne of the Lord.* But it seemes the Prophet contradicts himselfe, where he saith, *Ierusalem shall be the throne of the Lord; and yet no mention shall be made of the Arke of the Couenant*: but these two things agree very well together. For his meaning is, that Ierusalem shall be the eternall throne and dwelling place of the Lord, without any controuer-

Obiect.

Answ.

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sie or contradiction. Before the Israelites were led captiues, they bragged as hauing the true and sincere worship of God amongst them, and that in great pr..pe and outward ostentation; so as Ierusalem (in comparison thereof) was in a manner nothing, as touching the outward appearance. Now the Prophet saith, there shall be no more this kind of difference, neither shall the contention betweene the Iewes and the Israelites continue any longer. Why so? Because both of them should (without contradiction) hold Ierusalem to be the Sanctuary of the Lord: as if hee should say, All without exception shall serue God purely; which in times past was farre otherwise. Which hee yet better confirmes by the words following.

All nations shall be gathered vnto it, to the name of the Lord: or, *because of the name of the Lord*. Thus then all nations shall be gathered together vnto Ierusalem, for the loue they beare to the name of the Lord. We see there is no ambiguity in these words; for the Prophet plainly testifies, that the seruice which God had ordained in his Law, should be in such estimation, that all nations should be ready to imbrace whatsoeuer should be taught them by the Iewes. And yet *by all nations*, it may be hee meant the ten Tribes, who also in many other places are called many nations. If any will extend the words further, I gainsay him not: and (as yesterday I noted) the Iewes are of opinion, that the time of the Messias is heere described; in regard that which *Ieremiah* heere promiseth, was neuer fulfilled. For it is certaine, that such a concourse of all nations vnto Ierusalem, after the Iewes were returned home, was neuer seene, but the Iewes onely returned. Wherefore hence they conclude, that mention is heere made of Christ his kingdome: which I also consent vnto. *But in regard this returne and restitutiō of the people was (as it were) a pledge and entrance vnto the kingdome of Christ: therefore we must alwayes begin to count from thence, as oft as the Prophets speake of the new Church.* I grant indeed

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wee are not to seeke the vniuersall restauration of the whole world, any where else than in Christs comming: but the restauration of the Church began, when God first reached forth his hand to the Iewes, in the reedifying of the Temple, vntill the comming of Christ. As touching this present text; whether by *all nations*, we vnderstand all the *ten tribes*; or *both the kingdomes*; or *generally, all the nations of the earth*; the matter is not great. The Prophets meaning is plaine enough; namely, that the Church shall grow greater than it was before, after God shall haue brought backe his people from their captiuity: as also, that he will cause true religion to flourish, and that without any brawles or contentions at all.

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And yet that which followes confirmes their opinion, who expound this place of both kingdomes: *they* (saith he) *shall walke no more after the stubbornesse of their wicked heart*: for this is not wont to bee affirmed of such as are meerly profane, who haue alwayes been strangers from the doctrine of the Law. In regard this then, appertaines by a speciall right, to the Iewes, and Israelites; therefore it seemes this exposition will sute best, to take *all nations* heere, for the ten tribes, or for the whole nation.

Vers. 18. It followes in the next words, and according to the same sense: *In those dayes, the house of Iudah shall come, with the house of Israel.* Hereby it is easie to iudge, that the Prophet hath rather spoken of *Abrahams* posterity, than of strange nations: for this verse is added by way of exposition. Say that one should haue asked, what is meant by these words, *All nations shall come?* *Vers.* 17. In this verse he answeres, All nations shall come, *because the house of Israel shall be reunited with the house of Iudah*: that is to say, there shall be no more any seed of dissensions sowne betweene these two houses; in regard they shall imbrace each other with a brotherly affection, and shall acknowledge, that they haue in such wise issued from one and the same fountaine, that henceforth they ought to dwell together

together as one people. In a word, this 18. verse is the exposition of that, which the Prophet spake in the former.

We are also to note that which is further added, *They shall come together from the land of the North, into the Land which I gaue their fathers to inherit.* The Iewes at this time were not led captiue. For the Prophet himselfe spake vnto thē, being present in Ierusalem, and whiles they were quietly setled in their countrey, as in their owne nest: neither was it almost possible to perswade them of that which afterwards, to their great cost, they should haue wofull experience of; namely, that soone after, they should suffer the same exile which they then saw their brethren the Israelites felt, and tasted of. But the Prophet speakes *to them*, euen as if they had been *already banished their countrey*, and as if they had euen now taken vp their abode *in the land of the North*, as well as the Israelites.

They (saith he) *shall come together from the land of the North.* They might haue replied, *from the land of the North*, why? we are yet in possession of our owne land; neither is it possible any should dispossesse vs thereof; for God cannot for his promise sake cast vs out from his Temple; he hath chosen that to be his perpetuall rest in the middest of vs. Neither need we doubt, but such and the like murmurings were heard among them. But the Prophet beats backe their replies, and vaine confidence; and affirmes, that *the onely hope of their saluation depends now vpon the expectation which they ought to haue of their restitution from the Lord, after they had been for a time banished their owne countrey.* Wherein the Prophet commends vnto them the fruit which should redound vnto them by their captiuity, that with the greater patience they might bee able to beare the chastisements which should be inflicted vpon them. For an hundred desperate thoughts might haue inuaded them, had not this hope been set before them; namely, that this prison should containe them but for a time limited and prefixed; in re-

Psal. 132. 14.

No affliction so sharpe, in which God giues not some hope of an happy issue. to the afflicted, in time conuenient,

regard God meant yet once againe to gather them home, together with their brethren the Israelites. Now it followes.

And I said, How shall I giue thee children, and how shall I giue thee a desirable land, the heritage lusted after the armies of the Heathen? And I said, Thou shalt cry vnto me, my father, and shalt not estrange thy selfe from me.

IT is not my meaning to recite the opinions of euery one heere: it shall suffice to shew the Prophets meaning. This I am constrained to doe I confesse, when I am to touch the opinion of such as likes me not; for if there be any appearance, the reader may easily bee deceiued: but whileſt the truth is manifest enough of it selfe; what need I spend time in refuting other mens iudgements. In a word then, this is the Prophets meaning. *God heere askes how it is possible for Abrahams posterity to multiply againe, after they haue been in a manner vtterly abolished?* euen thus; *when* (saith he) *in calling me Father, thou shalt no more estrange thy selfe from me. This interrogation* tends to none other end, but to gaule the Iewes, as if they had bin vtterly left, and as if no hope at all had been left. And to say the truth, considering their obstinate malice, by which they had prouoked God to wrath, they could not be otherwise perswaded, but they should all perish. *God therefore speakes here as a man amazed*: as if hee should say, *you indeed for good cause, are hopelesse, your saluation is at an end: but in regard I haue determined to restore you into your first estate, I will deuise a way to multiply your race againe.* But by what meanes? Truly hee layes no greater a burthen vpon them. *Then to call him Father*; not with mouth onely, but with a true and hearty affection. Wee see now what the Prophet meant to say: for in bringing in God adopting (as it were) it is to humble the Israelites, as if the thing had been hard to bring about. In the meane while he encourageth them notwithstanding, in that

A question and an answere thereto.

that he shewes their saluation is ready at hand, *if so be they shall call vpon God*, in the vprightnesse of their hearts, and acknowledge him *their father*: prouided also that they *persewere therein, without euer turning away from him.* To be short, his meaning is, that the Israelites are but as dead men, and that they are neuer to expect a better estate, vnlesse they be (as it were) raised againe from the dead. And yet this hee promiseth them vpon condition (as we haue said) that *they call vpon him, not from the teeth outward, or by starts; for that zeale soone vanisheth away. Thou shalt not* then (saith he) *turne away from me*: that is, you shall alwayes be subiect to my yoke: so will I make it manifest, *that you haue not called me Father, in vaine.* It followes.

Vers. 20. *Truly as a woman dealeth ill, and disloyally with her* * *companion*: that is to say, when shee carries her selfe perfidiously towards her husband, in departing away from him, *so haue ye behaued your selues disloyally towards me, O house of Israel, saith the Lord.*

* *or husband.*

HE confirmes that which he said in the beginning of the former verse. For there he shewed, *that it should be a very hard matter for the Iewes to recouer that which they had lost, and to be created againe, as if they had been a new people*: he adds the reason, to wit, *because they resembled an adulterous woman*, as he spake before, in vers. 13. And yet would he not leaue them vtterly hopesse: he onely insists vpon these two poynts: first, that they acknowledge and confesse their faults from their hearts; and that they be inwardly touched in themselues with true remorse for them: secondly, that they hasten to Gods free mercies for the obtaining of pardon, which he doth not so much for their sakes, to wit, in regard of the Israelites, as in respect of those which were his owne countrey-men, and among whom hee liued. For (as hath been often said) hee principally respects the Iewes, who yet

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To wit, those of Iudah.

yet were so hardened in their vices, that they imagined their brethrens example, belonged not at all vnto them; albeit thereby God meant to bring their hard hearts to repentance. This is the reason then why he so sharply reprooues the Israelites; hauing before said, that the Iewes were worse than they.

See vers. 11.

Vers. 21. *A voyce is heard vpon the high places, the teares of the prayers of the children of Israel; because they haue perverted their way, and haue forgotten the Lord their God.*

HEre we may more euidently perceiue that which I touched erewhile; namely, that the Israelites are set as a spectacle for the Iewes; to the end these peruerse creatures whom God had so long spared, might know they should by no meanes escape scot-free, vnlesse they returned betimes to the Lord their God. For the Prophet here shewes how the Israelites *lamented*, and *wept*, in regard they had seuered themselues from their God, and had violated their faith which once they plighted to him. But what of all this? Euen that the Iewes who pleased themselues in their delights, might bee awakened; and that they should as verily keepe their turne also *in weeping and mourning*; vnlesse they betimes preuented Gods iust iudgements. It is true that the teares and lamentations of the Israelites were not yet such, that by them the signes of true repentance might be discerned: neither is it the Prophets meaning heere, highly to extoll their piety; hee onely meant to note, that they were thus sharply chastised, because they had forsaken God.

There was a voyce then *heard in the high places* (saith he) that is, it was manifest enough, that the Israelites were cruelly afflicted by the enemies. *Now then, they cry and weepe; now they thinke themselues the onely miserable people in the world.* But whence come these lamentations?

They had (saith he) *perverted their way:* which is as much

much as if he had said, what a prodigious thing is it to see the Iewes thus sottish, as not to be a whit touched with repentance, by the punishments which are inflicted vpon their brethren? For the afflictions which befell the the Israelites, astonished the whole world; because that kingdome and countrey which had long flourished, was now dispeopled; and in stead of them, wild beasts possessed the land, vntill some were sent from Persia, and others out of the Westerne parts, to inhabite there. How was it possible then, that a countrey so rich and populous, should lie waste? Euen because God had so foretold it by Moses: *You haue* (saith he) *reiected my Sabbaths; therefore shall your land rest, and shall no more be disquieted by you.* This was a very horrible spectacle of Gods iudgement; and the nations a farre off might well thinke with themselues, Surely this people hath grieuously offended God, seeing he hath so seuerely scourged them. Now the Iewes which saw such a waste made in this land before their eyes, and their brethren thus dispersed heere and there, must they not be more than senselesse, when they tooke none of these things to heart? We see then the Prophets meaning. *A voyce* (saith hee) *was heard vpon the high places*, as if the Israelites had cried and wept vpon the tops of the mountaines.

Leuit. 26. 34. 35

The teares (saith he) *of prayers*: yet he meanes not those *prayers* which were the testimonies of true faith and repentance. Hee onely vnderstands those lamentations which testified their sorrow vnder their afflictions. The Prophet meant not then to shew heere what confession the Israelites made; but rather to note out the cause why they were brought thus pitifully to bewaile their calamities and miseries; namely, *because they had perverted their wayes, and had forgotten the Lord their God.* It followes.

Vers. 22. *Returne ye rebellious children, I will heale your transgressions: behold, * we come vnto thee, for thou art the Lord our God.*

* or, we will come.

23. *Truly the sides of the little hils, the multitude of mountaines deceiue: certainly the saluation of Israel is in Iehouah our God.*

NOw the Prophet exhorts the Israelites to repentance, that by their example he might prouoke the Iewes to doe the like. I grant the poore captiues might indeed gather some fruit from this doctrine: but in regard *Ieremiah* was after a peculiar manner sent to the Iewes, questionlesse he chiefly bent his endeuours that way; as we said before. *God heere shewes them, that he is ready to be reconciled with the Israelites, albeit they haue grieuously offended*: and afterwards, he brings in the Israelites themselues *with their answere*; *Behold we come vnto thee, &c.* or, we will come: For there is greater likelihood that the Prophet speakes heere of that conuersion of the ten Tribes, which should afterward bee effected. Heere is *a kind of dialogue then, betweene God, and the Israelites.* God of his meere grace calles them to repentance, saying, *Returne ye rebellious children.* In the next place he promiseth *to play the part of a good physition, in healing all their diseases. I* (saith he) *will heale your transgressions*: that is, I will blot out all your sinnes, and will absolue you from all your offences. See heere what office God performes on his part. First, he summons the Israelites to repentance, and then promiseth them pardon; telling them that the remedie is ready at hand, if they harden not their hearts against this call. On the other side, the Israelites for their parts answere, *Behold we will come vnto thee.* Now in this place the Prophet taxeth the obstinacy of the Iewes, when he saith, the Israelites shall not harden their neckes, after God hath once graciously called them home to himselfe, but will rather shew themselues flexible and ready to yeeld obedience to his voyce. I grant this was not accomplished in respect of the generall, after they had leaue to returne; onely some few of them were thus affected; who preferred Gods honour,

before

before their owne priuate commodities. I say there were very few, euen of these: neither is it any great maruell. For it is not without cause God said before, that albeit there came but one out of a City, or but two out of a Tribe, yet for all that he would readily receiue them; although others in the meane while should remaine hardened in their obstinate courses. How euer it be, God heere signifies, that the Israelites shall not be so headstrong, but *they shall yeeld to his admonitions*, after he hath giuen them *good hope of pardon*, and of their redemption; which he the rather doth, that he might make the obstinacy of the Iewes to become so much the more odious and detestable. *See vers. 14.*

Others thinke the Prophet heere reprocheth the Israelites, in regard they alwayes pretended as if they sought the Lord. Thus they thinke then: You shall say indeed, *Behold we come vnto thee, thou art our God*: as if hee condemned their hypocrisie, because they alwayes made faire shewes in seeking God. But me thinkes they are far wide from the Prophets meaning. I make no doubt then, but *Ieremiah* heere sets that before the eyes of the Iewes, as in a glasse, which should greatly affect them, so as they should be no more addicted to their former vices and wickednesses. *Behold* (saith he) *God is ready prest to receiue your brethren to mercy*; albeit they be in a manner vtterly forlorne and past recouery: and they against for their parts *shall no sooner heare and vnderstand this voice of God in calling and inuiting them thus graciously vnto him, but they without let shall ioyfully returne and be conuerted vnto God. In the meane while what will you doe?* In the next place he adds, in the same sense, *Certainly deceit comes from the hils, and from the multitude of the mountaines*. The Prophet doth heere *in more words set forth the testimony of their repentance*: as if they should haue said, The hils haue deceiued vs, and the multitude of mountaines haue beguiled vs; that is, *we haue rather waited for greater defence from a multitude of gods, then by giuing our selues to rest wholly* *See Psal. 27. 8.* *Vers. 23.*

vpon one God. This deceit is it that hath ouerthrowne vs: *away therefore with all such lying vanities. Henceforth we will content our selues to haue the Lord onely for our God.* In a word, by these words the Israelites giues vs to vnderstand, and they also therein plainly confesse, that they were vndone by these most bewitching errours, when they forged to themselues a multiplicity of Gods, and rested not wholly vpon the onely true God.

Yet they further adde, *because in Iehouah our God, is saluation.* Heere they oppose *one God, against all fained gods,* as if they had said: The cause of all our miseries proceeded hence; namely, we neither rested nor contented our selues with one God onely, but ran hither and thither, after multitudes of gods. We see then that these two things can by no meanes stand together, *To serue one God, and in the meane while to seeke out diuersities of Gods*; and in them to forge vaine hopes, as those doe, whom one God sufficeth not. It followes.

Vers. 24. *And shame,* or reproach, *hath deuoured our fathers labours from our youth; their sheepe, their cattell, their sonnes, and their daughters.*

HE heere confirmes the same thing more at large, to wit, how God shewed by euident signes, that the people had much offended; because he *consumed their labours:* that is to say; whatsoeuer they had gotten and gathered together by their labour. For he ioynes *sheepe, and the rest of their cattell together:* and then *their sonnes and their daughters.* Now he attributes not this consumption *vnto God*; but it is a much more emphaticall manner of speech, when he saith, *shame hath consumed our fathers labours from our youth.* For by this word *shame,* he vnderstands the wickednesses whereof they ought to haue been ashamed. The meaning then is, that the cause of all their euils which they suffered, was not to be attributed to any thing else whatsoeuer; because it was wholly to be imputed

Shame taken for sinne.

puted *to their owne iniquities. Our shame* then, that is to say, *our insupportable sinnes*, haue consumed our fathers labours.

Vers. 25. *We haue been dieted in our shame, and our ignominie hath ouerwhelmed vs, because we haue carried our selues wickedly against the Lord our God, we and our fathers from our youth, euen to this day; and we haue not harkened to the voyce of the Lord our God.*

BEcause the Israelites repeat no new thing heere, but onely continue on their former speech, my purpose is briefly to passe ouer this whole verse, lest I should fill this volume with needlesse repetitions. They say then, that they were *dieted in their miseries*. Why so? *Because they had behaued themselues wickedly against the Lord their God.* Heere we see how that which they confessed before, is now expounded; namely, that their fathers labours had been consumed by their shame; that is to say, by their iniquities. *Now they charge vpon themselues, the euils which might haue been imputed to their fathers*; because they knew well enough *they were the heires of their fathers iniquities. We haue been dieted* (say they) *in our shame.* So that heere in one word they confesse, they are thus afflicted for *iust cause*; neither can they accuse God of cruelty, as if he had chastised them ouer seuerely. Why so? *Because they are humbled in their shame, and are couered ouer with their owne ignominie*: as if they should say, the cause of all our miseries ought to be attributed to our sinnes: neither ought the same to bee sought elsewhere. *For* (say they) *we haue dealt wickedly, we and our fathers euen from our youth.* By which words they signifie, that they haue prouoked God to wrath, not onely for *one day, but that they persisted in this their rebellion*, and from their *childhood* ceased not to nourish in them the iniquities of their fathers, adding sinne vnto sinne. They said before, that their fathers labours were consumed from their youth; Vers. 24.

youth; by which words they signified, that the misery had continued long. For God had not chastised them for one day onely, but had redoubled the same corrections, and yet without any fruit.

Now they adde further, *Euen as we haue wickedly behaued our selues against the Lord our God, from our youth*; so also hath he euen *from our youth* admonished vs to returne vnto him; neither did hee endeauour any thing more, than to effect the same: for hee called vs. Seeing then we haue been thus obstinate against him, God hath accordingly prosecuted vs in his wrath, and that most iustly.

After they say, *to this day*. By which words they confirme that which I said before: to wit, they were so obstinate, that they *neuer desisted* from their vngodly courses. And therewithall hee notes out the cause of all this mischiefe; namely, *because they hearkened not to the voice of the Lord their God*. For had they erred, and God had not spoken vnto them; their fault might haue been either some way excused, or lessened. *But seeing God sent his Prophets vnto them daily, one after another, who ceased not to call them to repentance; and yet they hearkened not at all*; there was not so much as the appearance of an excuse to be made in their behalfe, who had thus hardened their hearts in following their euill wayes. Thus then wee see how he amplifies their fault yet further, by this circumstance, *that they heard not the voyce of the Lord*: as if hee should say, God was not wanting to them on his part, to withdraw them from perdition; but so farre were they hardened in their impieties, that they despised this mercy which God offered them. Iust it is with God then, not onely *to this day* to punish these their impieties, but also their ingratitude, and that which is worst, their malicious obstinacy.

The Ppayer.

Almighty God, seeing we carry about vs such a corrupt nature, that all thy graces and benefits cannot cause vs to

cease

ceasse from prouoking thee by our wicked behauiour, as if of set purpose we meant to proclaime open warre against thee; giue vs grace to make such good vse of the examples thou settest before vs, to call vs to repentance; that thereby thou maist cure in vs this peruersity of our nature, and that we may in due season turne vnto thee: that by meanes hereof we may in such sort giue ouer our selues vnto thy seruice, that thy name may receiue glory by vs. Grant also that wee may endeauour to bring those likewise home with vs into the way of saluation, which may seeme to be vtterly lost; that so thy mercy may be extended vnto all, and that the saluation purchased by thine onely Sonne Iesus Christ, may by this meanes haue its effect and power ouer all the kingdomes and nations of the earth. Amen.

THE FOVRTEENTH LECTVRE, WHICH IS THE FIRST VPON THE fourth Chapter.

Vers. 1. *Israel, if thou returne, saith the Lord, returne vnto me,* or, repose thy selfe in me: *and if thou take away thine abominations from before my face, and that thou wander no more:* others, and thou shalt not depart from thy place.

NO doubt but the Prophet heere requires of the people a sound and sincere conuersion, in regard they seemed often to acknowledge their sinnes, and to shew great testimonies of their repentance; and yet for all that, dealt deceitfully with God. Thus then, because they had often counterfeited both with God and his Prophets; *Ieremiah* would now haue them to *returne vnto God in good earnest*, & without faining. This is the summe and

Hos.7.16. Psal.78.34-35. 36.37. and 57.

and scope of the Prophets doctrine; but there is some difficulty in the words. For some reade this place thus, Israel if thou returne to me, saith the Lord: so they ioyne these words, *to me*, with the former member, and then reade, *thou shalt haue rest*, apart; and so they will haue one and the same sentence twise repeated: for by and by it followes, *If thou take away thine abominations from before my face, thou shalt not depart from thy place*: that is to say, I will not cast thee out, as I haue threatened thee. Others take the verbe which is heere twise repeated in the Hebrew, in one and the same signification; *Israel if thou conuert, conuert to me*. It is certaine, that the Prophet exhorts the Israelites to returne vnto God in sincerity, and not in hypocrisie, as they were wont to doe. Now I haue told you what others thinke, but as I take it, the reading will agree better thus, *Israel, if thou conuert, repose thy selfe in me*; And then after, *and if thou take away thine abominations*. I take this *And*, to signifie as much as, To wit. *That is to wit* then, *if thou take away thine abominations from before my face, and if thou trotteſt no more hither and thither*. For where others expound it (as I told you before) *Israel, if thou returne, thou shalt haue rest*: it seemes to me vnapt; yea, I vtterly mislike this exposition: but if any will reade, *Israel if thou returne, stay thy selfe in me*, I leaue it to his choyce. Or thus; Israel, if thou conuert, conuert vnto me. For there is no great difference; in regard the Prophet reprooues the Israelites for their hypocrisie and dissimulation which they had formerly vsed, shewing signes euer and anon as if they had been ready to haue obeyed God, and to frame themselues to his seruice; and yet by and by after, manifested to all by the effects, that they meant no such matter. In regard then they had so oft proued themselues lyars, and full of deceit; therefore it is that the Prophet in the person of God requires them to returne vnto God without faining. If we reade, *Israel, returne to me*, the reason of it will be, because *they alwayes laboured to make long circuits, lest they*

should

should come directly vnto God. For it is ordinary with hypocrites, to make goodly shewes of conuersion: but in the meane while to get themselues as farre off from God as they can. This is the Prophets meaning then, if we follow this reading: Israel, I wish thee to be wiser, than to thinke thou shalt gaine ought by this deceitfull course, when hereafter thou shalt faine a conuersion. *Returne to me*, then, that is to say, know that thou hast to doe with God, who will not be mocked nor deceiued, no more than he mockes or deceiues others. *Returne to me then, with thine whole heart, let there now be no faining in thy conuersion.* But if we thinke it better to expound the Hebrew word in the second place, in a diuers signification from the former, there will be no great difference neither in that reading, as touching the sense: *Israel if thou returne, rest thy selfe in me*: that is to say, for the time to come, *renounce all thine idols, and all thy wicked and peruerse lusts.* And thus the Prophet in briefe shewes, that *there is no other meanes of true conuersion, but for Israel to repose himselfe quietly in God onely*; and not to suffer himselfe to be transported hither and thither, as a vagabond after his vaine lusts, as often as he had done before.

And thus that which followes agrees very well, namely, *if thou take away thine abominations out of my sight*: for (as I haue said) this particle *And*, may be taken by way of exposition thus, *To wit, if thou take away, &c.* For this is the vice which *Ieremiah* meant principally to condemne; namely, that the Israelites made outward shewes of piety and religion, but were notwithstanding euer wauering, and could not from the heart giue ouer themselues vnto God, but alwayes hung in suspense which way to take: neither is it without cause that *Ieremiah* reproues this vice in them; and therefore also doe I willingly receiue this exposition, *Israel, if thou returne, stay thy selfe in me*: that is, abide firmely and constantly in me. But how may this be done? namely, *if thou take thine abominations out of my sight, and ceasest to trace vp and*

downe

See chap. 3. 9. Doct.

downe like a vagabond, according to thy former lightnesse and inconstancy, which is but too well knowne already. However it be, the place is very remarkable against all hypocrites, who though they dare not openly reiect all admonitions of the Prophets and holy men of God, yet vnder pretext of some faire shewes of repentance, they seeke out all the starting holes they can inuent, to estrange themselues from God. No doubt but with their lips they will pretend to seeke God; but in the meane while they finde euasions, that they may not come neare him: which is the reason why I said, that this is a very excellent place, teaching vs, that God contents not himselfe with nifles, which consist in the inuentions of hypocrites, but requires the vprightnesse and sincerity of the heart, and vtterly detests *all dissimulation.* For which cause he expresly adds, *If thou take away thine abominations from before mine eyes:* for hypocrites alwayes loue to be seene of men, and seeke to be approoued of them; resting in that opinion which they conceiue of them. But God in the meane while calles them *to himselfe:* and we are also to note, that he can neither be mocked nor deceiued; because it is he *who searcheth the heart and raynes.*

Vers. 2. *And thou shalt sweare the Lord liueth, in truth, in iudgement, and in righteousnesse, and all nations shall bee blessed in him, and shall glory in him.*

HEre the Prophet prosecutes the same matter: for he refels all these goodly shewes by which they thought God would bee pacified. For whilest they had the name of God in their mouthes, they thought that sufficient to iustifie their cause. As how? *Call we not vpon the name of the Lord? yeeld we not vnto him his due honour, when we sweare by his name?* For the Prophet takes one particular for the generall; namely, *swearing by Gods name, for his whole worship.* Because the Iewes then pretended the name of God, thinking they had so throughly

purged

purged themselues, that none could charge them with any fault; therefore the Prophet saith, *thou shalt sweare the Lord liueth in truth*: that is, you hold your selues safe and secure; in regard you imagine that a bare shew, and an outward appearance of godlinesse will serue the turne, to procure your absolution from all your sinnes: and that God will be well enough appeased, as oft as you boast your selues to be the seed of *Abraham*, and (in a word) *as oft as you sweare the Lord liueth*. But in the meane while perceiue you not how sacrilegious you are in abusing the sacred name of God, in this false manner. *Sweare* then (saith he) *in truth*. Now we see how the Prophets words depend one vpon another. In the former verse hee affirmed that the people *tyed vnto God*, in regard they neuer kept touch with him, but brake their promise. For they alwayes wandred from him. Now he adds, that the Israelites shall gaine nothing by calling vpon God thus in this outward appearance, shewing by their *outward gestures*, that they were his people, and did him very good seruice: all this (saith hee) is nothing, vnlesse you *serue God, in truth, in iudgement, and in righteousnesse*. *Coherence.*

No doubt but *truth*, is heere taken for the vprightnesse and integrity of the heart: as wee shall see afterwards in the fifth chapter. In regard he commands them then, *to sweare by the name of God in truth*: it is as much as if hee had said, that God is not duly serued, according as of right he ought to be, vnlesse the heart bee emptied and purged from all fraud and dissembling. In a word, hee shewes, *that where the sincerity and integrity of the heart is wanting, there can no acceptable seruice bee performed vnto God*. But this *truth* whereof the Prophet speakes, is principally knowne by *iudgement and iustice*: namely, when men conuerse one with another in vprightnesse, and when euery one renders to his neighbour that which to him appertaines; also where none seekes his owne aduantage, with the disaduantage of another. When this *equity* (I say) and vprightnesse heere mentioned is thus *Chap. 5. 3.*

preserued

preserued and kept amongst men, then is that accomplished which the Prophet in this place requires: because men honour not God with shewes, nor with vaine and lying words, but where they shew indeed that they serue God without any vizard of holinesse, and they yeeld him that reuerence which he deserueth.

That which followes, *and all nations shall be blessed*, is also expounded sundry wayes by the expositors: yet I make no question, but the Prophet heere closely taxeth the Israelites, in regard Gods name was exposed to many reproches, whilest they gaue profane nations cause to say, *that there was no power nor strength in the God of Israel*: yea and the Israelites themselues often expostulated the matter with God, as if he had giuen them iust cause so to doe. As how? God promised vs that we should be made mirrours of his blessing: and yet in the meane while wee lie open heere to all the iniuries profane people can lade vs withall. How hangs these things together? Because the Israelites then murmured thus in respect of their condition, and thus wronged the Lord; the Prophet answeres them, *The nations shall be blessed in God, and shall glory in him*. Some refetre this to the people of Israel, but very vnaptly. I grant he promised *Abraham* that all nations should be blessed, or should blesse themselues in his seed: but this blessing had not his beginning in them, according as the Prophet heere noteth. For respect must be had to the cause of this blessing. How could the nations blesse themselues in the seed or of-spring of *Abraham*, vnlesse God, who is the authour of this blessing, had manifested his grace towards the children of *Abraham*? The Prophet then speakes very aptly heere, when he saith, *Then shall all nations blesse themselues in God, and shall glory in him*: that is to say, *your selues are the cause why Gods curse pressetb you thus, and that you are a reproach in the sight of all the heathen*: as also, *why the name of God is blasphemed among the nations*. For your owne impiety constraines God to handle you more seuerely than otherwise hee would:

for

for according to his nature hee is enclined to shew himselfe fauourable and gracious vnto you. What is the cause then, *why all nations blesse not the Lord, and that they glory not in him?* that is to say, *that pure religion spreads not it selfe throughout the whole world, and that the Gentiles ioyne not with you in approuuing the worship of the onely true God?* Euen *your impiety and malicious obstinacy is it, which hinders Gods glory, and that the whole world rings not of your happinesse and felicity.* We now then haue the Prophets meaning: namely, that the Iewes did expostulate the matter with God without cause, in respect of the miseries and calamities which they endured; because themselues had sought out, and also heaped vpon their owne heads all these euils, and had therewithall giuen the profane nations matter and occasion thus wickedly to pollute and blaspheme the sacred name of God. Now it followes.

What hurt professors doo themselues and others by their bad conuersation.

Vers. 3. *For the Lord saith thus to to the men of Iudah,* that is, to the Iewes, *and to Ierusalem, plow vp your fallow ground, and sowe not among thornes.*

THe Prophet still prosecutes the same doctrine: for he reprehends the hypocrisie of the Israelites, because they would needs satisfie God without ward ceremonies onely, albeit their hearts were full fraught with fraud, malice, and all other impieties. Therefore hee saith, *God willes the Iewes to plow vp their fallow ground, and no more to sowe among thornes:* which is a very apt similitude. For the Scripture is wont to compare vs *to a field*, when it cals vs the Lords heritage. And therefore are we indeed chosen to be Gods peculiar people, that he might *reape some fruit* of vs; euen as the husband man lookes to reape commodity of his fields and possessions. True it is that God reapes no benefit by vs: that which he requires of vs is this, that our whole life may be referred to his glory. How euer it be, yet God would not haue

vs idle, *nor vnfruitfull*, but that we ſhould yeeld him ſome commodity. In the meane while what do the hypocrites? *They ſowe indeed*: that is, they ſeeme to haue ſome deſire; nay more than that, they loue to haue it knowne, that they are repleniſhed with a wonderfull deale of zeale, when God calles or exhorts them to repentance. They keepe a great bluſtering then, but they marre and corrupt all by their *miſtures*: euen as if one ſhould ſowe his ſeed among thornes. Now it is certaine, *that ſeed that ſowne among thornes* neuer comes to good, vnleſſe the ground be firſt well husbanded and tilled. God then derides *ſuch a fond diligence* whereabouts hypocrites buſie themſelues ſo much, when he tels them they doe but labour in vaine: becauſe it is all one as if an husband man ſhould goe caſt his ſeed againſt the wind. For when the ground is once peſtered with briars and thornes, albeit the ſeed ſowne there ſhould come vp; yet would it neuer beare any fruit. This is the reaſon why God would haue the Iſraelites *to plow vp their fallow ground*: as if he ſhould ſay, you reſemble a field full of thornes and briars, and therefore you haue need to be plowed vp, not after an ordinary manner. For where a field is ouer-growne with theſe brambles, what would it auaile a man, if hee ſhould ſowe neuer ſo much graine there? neither indeed would the plough be ſufficient to till ſuch a piece of ground to any purpoſe; but of neceſſity ſome coſt muſt firſt bee beſtowed vpon the ſame by ſome other meanes; namely, the thornes muſt be ſtubbed vp. The Prophet ſignifies then, that the people were growne hardened in their iniquities, ſo as they were not onely full of many vices, as if a piece of ground had lien ſome two or three yeeres fallow; but there were inward and more priuie ſinnes which lurked in them, which the plough could not well get out, vnleſſe paines were taken before in ſtubbing them vp by the roots; euen as when thornes, briars, and brambles, haue (for many yeeres together) taken root in a field. We ſee now then, how the Prophet not only meant to ſhew that

there

there harboured in this people of Israel some impieties; as the contempt of God, and other enormities: but they were growne obstinate therein; because for a long time they had taken deepe rooting in their sinnes, so as *there was not only need of a plough, but of other instruments and tooles, to stubbe vp these thornes*, which had taken so deepe rooting in them. As before then he shewed, that they lost their labour, vnlesse with a sincere and pure affection of heart they turned vnto God, resting themselues in him alone: so he heere commands them to examine and sift their liues in good earnest, and not to sowe their seed at aduenture, like the hypocrites, who make a slight confession of their sinnes. He bids them then, carefully *to search into their secret and hidden sinnes*, as if they were to root vp thornes and bryars out of a field, which had long lien fallow and vntilled. now it followes.

See verf. 1.

Verf. 4. *Be circumcised to the Lord, and take away the foreskin of your hearts, ye men of Iudah, and ye inhabitants of Ierusalem, lest my wrath come forth like fier, and it burne and none be able to quench it, because of the wickednesse of your workes.*

THe Prophet here more plainly expresseth that which before he deliuered vnder a metaphor or borrowed speech. For he willed them to pluck vp those vices which had taken deepe rooting: as men are wont to purge fields that haue long lien fallow, of thornes & brambles. But now without any figure, hee tels them plainly what they ought to doe: though yet in this latter part of the sentence, there wants not a figuratiue manner of speech also. He calles them back then *to circumcision*, which was vnto them as a signe of their renouation: as if he should say, you know well enough what you ought to doe, were it not you are growne so vnteachable, that it is impossible to make you vnderstand any thing. For (saith he) why was circumcision ordained? meant not God by this signe

Circumcision a signe of renouation.

to teach you, that if a man bend himselfe to be truly religious, he must begin at the meditation hereof, namely, *that he abstaine from all the sinfull affections of the flesh: that he renounce himselfe, and be dead (as it were) both to himselfe and to the world:* for thus much *circumcision imports.* The Prophet therefore shewes, that the Israelites were altogether inexcusable, in regard they failed neither through errour, nor ignorance; but carried themselues wickedly and fraudulently towards God; because circumcision which was (as it were) their entrance into Gods seruice, gaue sufficient notice, that they yeelded to God neither his due, nor true seruice, vnlesse they *renounced themselues.* We see now what the Prophet meant to say, when he wils them *to be circumcised to the Lord, &c. Be circumcised* (saith he) *to the Lord.* Why so? Because circumcision was the thing they then most gloried in; to wit, onely before men. For albeit with full mouth they bragged, and prided themselues much in this, that they were Gods peculiar people, yet was this nothing else but meere vanity and ambition in them. The Prophet therefore wils them to dispatch out of their hearts all these triflings, and to be circumcised *to the Lord*; that is, not to stand musing how to obtaine the fauour and praise *of men*; but rather wisely to consider how they had to doe *with God.* For which cause he adds, *Take away the foreskin of your hearts*: as if he should say, when God commanded *Abrahams* breed to bee circumcised, was it in regard he delighted to haue this little skin to be offered him as a sacrifice? No, hee aimed at a farre other end; namely, *the circumcision of the heart.* In a word, the Prophet teacheth that heere, which *Paul* hath more cleerly expounded in Rom. 2. 29. to wit, that *the letter* is nothing *before God*; but he requires *the spirit.* For by these words *Paul* meanes, that *the outward signe* is nothing, vnlesse the *inward truth* thereof be added thereunto: for the circumcision of the letter with Saint *Paul*, signifies as much as *the outward ceremony*: as amongst vs wee may call it the literall

What Circumcision imports.

What God aimed at in commanding Circumcision in the fore-skin.

literall Baptisme, when neither faith nor repentance goes with it. But the *spirit*, or *spirituall circumcision*, is, *when a man denies himselfe, and is renewed*: in a word, *that true and vnfained conuersion of the heart vnto God*, whereof the Prophet heere speakes. And *Moses* also toucheth the same, Deut. 10. 16. for there he shewes how the Iewes much deceiued themselues, if they thought to satisfie God with the bare circumcision of the flesh: therefore saith he, *circumcise the fore-skin of your hearts*. I grant in another place he shewes, that this is *Gods peculiar worke*: but howsoeuer God circumciseth the heart, *yet it is not in vaine that men are exhorted to circumcise themselues spiritually*: which also we may now say of Baptisme. For when Saint *Paul* exhorts the faithfull to the feare of God, and to holinesse of life, hee brings in Baptisme therewithall: and yet it is certaine that men attribute not that to themselues, which God signifies vnto vs by the signe of Baptisme. But his meaning is, *we should aske of God the grace of his holy spirit, that the outward signe become not vnprofitable vnto vs, by hauing the inward truth thereof*. Thus then, when the Prophet commands the Israelites *to take away the fore-skin of their hearts*; it is all one as if he had said vnto them, *I see you are but too liberall in preferring ceremonies, and the outward seruice; but what auailes all this, vnlesse the integrity of the heart goe before?*

Literall Baptisme what.

Spirituall Circumcision what.

Deut. 30. 6.

Rom. 6. 4.

God commands vs that which we are vnable to doe, that we might seeke to him for ability to doe it.

Now he speakes *to the Iewes, and to the inhabitants of Ierusalem*, in regard they thought themselues more excellent than the Israelites, vpon whom God had inflicted so heauie chastisements. Thus then he shewes that the *Tribe of Iudah*; yea euen *the inhabitants of Ierusalem*, were no better than others; and that they were no more priuiledged than their brethren; but they must be accountable to God, as well as they, vnlesse they returned in time, yea and that without faining too.

After he adds, *lest my wrath breake forth like fier, &c.* Heere the Prophet freely and plainly denounceth, that the Iewes *must not differre their repentance, till God declare*

Repentance must not be differred for feare of after-claps.

himselfe their iudge, in executing his vengeance vpon them; for then it will be too late. To be short, hee admonisheth them *to prevent Gods iudgements betimes; for if Gods wrath begin once to burne, it will vtterly consume and destroy them, like a fier.* It will be no time then, to quench this fier. But on the contrary, *if they now repent, he sets before them some hope of pardon, in regard the wrath of God was not as yet kindled.*

In the nex place he adds, *because of the wickednesse of your actions:* by which words the Prophet gaules them yet further to the quicke, and shewes they shall gaine nothing by their cauils: for if God be once set vpon his iudgement seat, and shall but begin to execute his iudgements; there will then be no more place for any of their vaine replies or excuses: to wit, as if they deserued not to be so seuerely dealt withall; and that the nature of their sinnes were not so hainous. God (saith he) will cause you to feele by wofull experience, how odious your sinnes are before him: when he shall once stretch out his hand against you, he will not then stand to answere your bablings. It followes.

Vers. 5. *Declare it*, or, publish it *in Iudah, and cause it to be knowne in Ierusalem; and say, Sound the trumpet in the land, call, assemble and say, Assemble your selues, and let vs enter into the fortified Cities.*

6 *Lift vp the standard*, or, the banner *in Sion; assemble you*, or flee. Others translate, be valiant: but others take it in a contrary sense, as if it were said, that they should flee, or assemble together for feare: *stay not*, or, you shall not stay, *because I will cause euill to come from the North, and a great ruine*, or breaking.

THe Prophet heere handles his nation somewhat seuerely, because he knew they were rebellious, and growne so obstinate in their sinnes, that it was (in a manner) impossible by faire meanes to bring them into the right

right way. He therefore inueyes thus earnestly against them, as men past cure, and as against them, in whom he knew his doctrine would become wholly vnprofitable. Now albeit *he sounds the alarme*, as the Prophets were wont to doe, *to strike the greater terrour into them*; yet he seemes to doe it after a taunting manner, when *bee bids them publish it in Iudah, &c.* as if hee should say, when your necessity shall pinch you a little neerer, then shall you learne by experience, that God is offended with you. It may be, now you will set light by my admonitions: neither will God then draw you to him by violence, because you seeke cussions and hiding places; you shall cry then at the sound of the trumpet, Behold the enemies are come, and as many as wil, be at our doores: *Therefore let every one of us retire into Ierusalem, enter into the City, and saue our selues in Sion*; that is to say, though we cannot be safe *in the City*, yet at the least wee shall bee safe within the *fortresse of Sion*. *And yet notwithstanding* (saith he) *God will cause this plague to come vnto you out of the North*, so as whatsoeuer you imagine will be for your safety and profit, it shall vtterly vanish away to nothing. But it is especially to be noted, that the Prophet *proclaims open warre* against them as Gods herald: and albeit he insults ouer their obstinacy; yet he tels them there shall be such a generall terrour, as they must bee forced to saue themselues *by flight*.

Sing (saith he) *with a loud voyce, in Iudah, and publish it, or make it known in Ierusalem*. The Hebrew word signifies word for word, *publish*, or *cause to heare*. But he speaks not simply here as *Ioel* doth, when hee calles, to haue the trumpet sounded, Ioel 2.1.15. for he exhorts the people there to repentance. But *Ieremiah* (as I haue said) frumps the Iewes in regard of their contumacy and obstinacy: as if he should say, I see well enough what you will doe, when you shall be pressed with the stroke of Gods vengeance; truly you meane not then to repent, but you will cause *the trumpet to be sounded throughout the land*, that all

may *retire to Sion*: as if thence you were able to beate backe your enemies, and saue your liues. *God then commands them not to sound the trumpet, but rather shewes what they will doe.* Some there are who quite and cleane from the purpose translate, *Accomplish*: but the most receiued opinion is, *Assemble*. And yet me thinkes the expositors haue not sufficiently weighed the etymologie of this word: for in Hebrew it signifies as much as wee say in French, Gather you. *Gather you* then, and assemble you, and we will come into the strong Cities. I see your meaning is to seeke some sufficient place of refuge, to secure you in respect of your enemies: be it so saith God.

Amassez vous.

Verse. 6.

Reare vp the standard in Sion, and flee thither for succour: but in the meane while, *I will bring a plague vpon you from the North.* The word which followes in the Hebrew, may be expounded two wayes, *stay not in a place*; that is, flee quickly; as they commonly doe that are ouertaken with feare: or rather, *you shall not stand*; that is to say, albeit you thinke to secure your selues very safely in this mountaine of *Sion*, yet shall you not bee able to stand there: but the first exposition seemes to sute best.

For the meaning of this word, North, see the 13. verse of this chapter.

The Prayer.

Almighty God, for as much as wee cease not daily to estrange our selues from thee by our sinnes, and notwithstanding the same, thou ceasest not graciously to exhort vs to repentance, promising to be fauourable and mercifull vnto vs; grant we may not remaine obstinately in them; neither let vs shew our selues vnthankefull in respect of thy so great kindnes towards vs; but giue vs grace so to conuert and turne vnto thee, that our liues may testifie our repentance to be vnfained: also that we may so securely rest in thee, that the wicked lusts of our flesh may not carry vs hither and thither; but grant we may rather continue setled and established in a right purpose of heart, whereby we may endeauour so to obey thee in the whole course of our life, that at the length we may receiue

the fruit of the same our obedience, in thy Kingdome of glory, and that through the merits of Iesus Christ thine onely Sonne our Saviour. Amen.

THE FIFTEENTH LECTVRE, WHICH IS THE SECOND VPON THE fourth Chapter.

Vers. 7. The Lion is come forth of his fort, or den, *and the destroyer of nations is departed, he is gone out of his place, to make the land desolate: thy Cities shall be so destroyed, that there shall remaine none inhabitant therein.*

THe Prophet in more words heere shewes what this threatning meanes, which wee began to touch yesterday. For in vers. 6. God said he would cause *a plague to come from the North.* Now heere hee shewes *what kind of plague it should be:* and compares *the King of Babylon to a Lion:* and afterwards, without vsing any figure, he calles him *The destroyer of nations.* By this similitude *of a Lion,* he giues the Israelites to vnderstand, *that they shall be too weake to resist:* and in adding, *hee shall bee a destroyer of nations,* he signifies, *they shall perish as well as the rest.* For if *Nabuchadnezzar* had sufficient power to destroy *many nations,* what should let the Iewes from passing that way, or how could they escape the same calamity which others had tasted of before them? Therefore he saith, *the destroyer shall come.* But in all these words *hee vseth the present tense;* to shew the certainty of his prophesie: as also that he might so much the more affright and terrifie such as were become secure and careless, and wholly rocked asleepe in their hypocrisie, in regard no threatning at all could moouе them. For whilest God spared

The King of Babell called a Lion, and why.

1
2

red them, they contemned his iudgements, imagining they should neuer be called to an account, or chastised for any of all their offences. That the Prophet then might the better awaken them out of their drowsinesse, hee sets the thing (as it were) before their eyes, euen as if *Nabuchadnezzar* had been now ready with a mighty armie, to sacke and destroy the whole land & countrey of Iudeah. Now he saith, *the Lion is gone out of his den*: but the word he vseth, properly signifies, a thicke twisting or intangling, where there are a multitude of trees interlaced one within another; or where a place is ouergrowne with briars and brambles. Now this similitude agrees very well; for the Iewes neuer dreamed that the King of Babell would come vp from a place so farre remote from them, *in regard the passages were very vneuen to leade or conduct an armie through*. And yet the Prophet saith, the Lion shall come forth *of his thicket* or burrow; and that nothing shall be able to hinder his passage, nor entrance into the open field. In the end he concludes, that *the Cities shal be raised, so as no inhabitant shal remaine there*. Now it followes,

Vers. 8. *Therefore gird you with sackcloth, mourne and howle; for the fury of the Lords wrath is not turned backe from vs.*

IT is not likely that the Prophet doth heere exhort his countreymen to repentance: for there followes a more euident doctrine touching this poynt hereafter. For the present, he onely warnes them, that *a great lamentation* is approaching them, in regard hee saw the hypocrites so farre plunged in their delights, that it was impossible once to terrifie them. Therefore hee tels them they are much deceiued, if they thinke to be in any safety *whilest God is their enemie*. *Clothe you with sackcloth* (saith he) *mourne and howle*. The reason followes, *because the wrath of the Lord is not yet turned away from vs*. For we know how

See vers. 14.

hypocrites

hypocrites are wont to weaken Gods power, as if by their obstinacy they were able either to turne back his iudgements, or else to hold his hands (as you would say) from executing his will. Because hypocrites then shew themselues thus malepert against God, the Prophet expressly saith, *that Gods wrath is not turned backe*. By which words he giues them to vnderstand, that they shall bee alwayes, and euery way miserable, vntill they bee reconciled vnto God. We now conclude the Prophets meaning. For hee confirmes that which he said before, namely, that the Lion was come forth, and the destroyer was already in armes. I say, *he now confirmes those words, that hee might bereaue them of all hope, vnlesse God showed them mercy*. But he tells them *God is angry*: therefore it must needs follow, that they lay open to all the miseries that might be.

See verse. 7.

Such as with whom God is angry, are exposed to all the miseries that may be.

Verse 9. *And in that day saith the Lord, it shall come to passe that the Kings heart shall faile, and the heart of the Princes; and the Priests shall be astonished, and the Prophets shall wonder.*

IN regard the *regall dignity* as yet remained among the Ieewes, albeit their power was much diminished: they trusting in their *King*, thought themselues in regard thereof, in great safety: and this was the reason why they trembled at no threatning. For this name *of a Kingdome*, though not altogether in its perfection, yet in such a mean estate as it then was, serued them as an anuill, to beat back all the Prophets blowes. Moreouer, we know how pride alwayes possesseth the harts of courtiers. For as they highly magnifie the greatnesse of their Kings, so insult they, in regard of their wisedome and courage. Because this fond conceit of their *King* the, together with the great craks *of the chief courtiers*, deceiued the Ieewes. The Prophet saith, *In that day, both the heart of the King, and the heart of his great men, should faile*. Neither is it to be doubted, but by this word *heart*, he meanes the vnderstanding: the word being

Heart taken for the vnderstanding.
Cordatus.

being often so taken in many places: God (saith *Moses*, Deut. 29. 4.) hath not hitherto giuen thee *an heart*: and the Latines also call him *wise* and discreete, who is of a quicke vnderstanding, and of a ripe wit. Thus then, the Prophet shewes, that whereas the people fondly esteemed *their King as a fortresse of inuincible defence; yet all would proone in the end but meere froth and vanity.* For then (saith he) the *King shall be depriued of all sense and vnderstanding: the Counsellors* also, who commonly shewed themselues men of great spirits, should then proue as witlesse as poore bruit beasts. Trust you not therefore, if you be wise, in such deceitfull helpes. In a word, the Prophet meant to reiect that peruerse confidence wherewith the Iewes were bestotted, in reposing their safety vpon the wisedome and discretion, as well of the King, as of their gouernours, thinking thereby to bee secured from all inconueniences. As much he affirmes, not only of them, but *of the Priests and Prophets* also: because this order of Priesthood carried in it a great splendor and outward pompe. For the Tribe of *Leui* assumed not this honour vnto it selfe; but God himselfe had giuen the gouernment of his people *to the Priests*. For which cause all were generally perswaded, that *the Priests* could not bee destitute of counsell and vnderstanding.

No priuiledges that people haue, will serue to secure them, when God hath a purpose to punish them.

Mal. 2. 7.

As touching *the Prophets*; no doubt but *Ieremiah* affoords this name to those *impostures*, who falsly pretended the name of God: which manner of speech is very vsuall with the Prophets. *He speakes not here, of the true and faithfull seruants of God, who endeauoured to discharge their duty; but of those who then bragged onely of the title and place of Prophets.*

He saith, *they shall be all astonished*. In a word, hee bereaues them of that false perswasion wherewith they hardened their hearts, to become fearlesse in respect of Gods iudgement.

Obserue.

This place then is well worthy our obseruation: for it shewes, that Gods grace is tyed neither to particular estates,

estates, nor to honourable titles. As touching the title of *Prophet*, certainly it was alwayes much esteemed. Moreouer, *the office of the Priest* must needs bee very honourable, in regard it was founded vpon the expresse commandement of God. And yet the Prophet sheweth that there was no vnderstanding neither *in the Priests*, nor *in the Prophets*, because they were become vtterly senselesse and beloosted. Touching *the perfidy of the King*, wee know he bare in him the figure of Iesus Christ; and yet the like is said euen of the King, *and his counsellors also*; to wit, that they shall be blinded by the iust iudgement of God, so as they should discerne of nothing. Thus it followeth:

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Vers. 10. *And I said, Ah, ah, Lord God, surely thou hast deceived this people of Ierusalem, saying, you shall haue peace, and the sword pierceth to the soule.* That is, notwithstanding the sword, &c. for heere the coniunction is put for the aduersatiue.

Some expound this place, as if the Prophet here propounded the peoples words. For it is the manner euen of the most wicked, to charge God foolishly, when his hand presseth them; and to braule and contend with him. They thinke then that the Prophet speakes not here in his owne person, but in the person of the whole people: as if they should say, Lord! what meaneth this? surely thou hast deceiued vs. Others take it somewhat more strictly; namely, that the Prophet heere makes his complaint to God, in regard hee suffered the false Prophets to abuse the people by their flatteries, so as they had in a manner bewitched their minds and vnderstandings: but there is another sense, which I more willingly approoue of: for as I thinke, the Prophet taunctingly and ouerthwartly toucheth the false and pernicious flatteries wherewith the false Prophets had (in a manner) brought the poore Iewes vnto vtter ruine; in making them beleeue

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Worldlings delight to be soothed vp in their sinnes.

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leeue they should obtaine mercy of God, and alwayes preached to them pleasing things. Neither are wee to doubt, but God rendred vnto the Iewes their iust reward, when he permitted them to be thus deceiued by these deceiuers. For we know the world hath alwayes been subiect to such a sickenesse; namely, a desire it hath to bee delighted with sweet words, and vaine flatteries. As in Micha 2.11. where God by his Prophet thus reprocheth the Iewes: You seeke out Prophets (saith hee) that may make you large promises of plentifull harueests, and vintages. By which you may perceiue how well they liked to be spared, and by no meanes to haue their sinnes examined: also, that they not onely hated the true pastors, and those which sharply reproued their vices; but vtterly detested them. God then for this cause was as willing that there should be many hirelings, which should assume vnto themselues the name and title of Prophets. And thus it came to passe, that the Iewes alwayes dreamed of a peaceable estate: which (as I haue said) is a thing very common with hypocrites. Now the Prophet heere by a very tart and gauling manner of speech, reproues such deceits. *Ah, ah, Lord!* (saith he) *surely thou hast deceiued this people.* For the Prophet speakes not heere, as in the person of the people; neither complaines hee because God gaue this liberty and license to the false Prophets; *but in taunting wise he insults as well ouer those deceiuers, as ouer the wholenation.* Now in that he directs his speech to God, it is in regard, none else would giue him audience. He speakes to God then, as if he should say, *Behold, Lord, those who affect flatteries, & neuer had eares to hearke vnto the holy admonitions of thy faithfull seruants; are well worthy to be thus serued. Seeing then they would in no hand endure any correction; let them now learne that they haue been deceiued by others, rather than by thee.* We now perceiue then, that the Prophet scornes such a dulnesse, as had caused the Iewes to become insensible so long a time together. And thus the naturall sense is, *I said*; that is, I turned mee to

God.

God. I said then, *Lord God; surely thou hast deceiued this people.* For this word *surely*, is put heere by way of derision; that is, *it now appeares they were deceiued indeed. But by whom? I grant they would gladly lay the blame thereof vpon thee; but they all well deserued that the false Prophets should thus beguile them, for being too credulous.*

Ye shall haue peace. These words neuer came out of Gods mouth. For *Ieremiah* thundred daily, and continually threatened their destruction. He was (as it were) an Herald sent from heauen, to affright and terrifie the whole world; but none gaue him audience: the Iewes in the meane while applauded the false Prophets, who flattered, and entertained them with sweet words, and faire promises. We see then, that God neuer spake of this, but the Iewes on the contrary, not onely willingly suffered, but also much reioyced to heare of these goodly promises, which the false Prophets to gratifie them withall, made vnto them. *Ieremiah* then *attributes that to God, by way of derision*, which he knew well enough could agree to none but to those deceiuers.

In the next place he adds, *and the sword pierceth to the soule*, that is, *notwithstanding we are now wounded with mortall and deadly blowes.* Now heere the Prophet sets these dangerous and wicked flatteries before the eyes of the Iewes, which caused them to lift vp their crests: shewing, *that in the end they shall assuredly feele how sadly they pretended the name of God.*

Vers. 11. *At that time they shall say to this people*, that is, of this people, *and of Ierusalem, the dry winde*; others translate, a vehement wind, *to the high places of the desert*, word for word it is, in the desert, *towards the way of the daughter of my people, not to fanne, nor to cleanse:*

12 *A wind more full than those, shall come vnto me; and now also I will pronounce iudgements with them.*

Ieremiah prosecutes his prophesie still, when he saith, a turbulent wind shall quickly come, which shall not only

ly fanne and cleanse, but shall also scatter and ouerthrow all. He shewes then how great and horrible the calamity shall be, which he mentioned before: he compares it to a dry and sharpe wind. The Hebrew word hath diuers significations; but doubtlesse hee speakes heere of such a wind as comes rushing with great violence, and disturbs all the ayre; especially when there is neither clouds, nor any trees to hinder the course thereof: and that is the cause why he speakes of the high places, and deserts. It is as much then as if he had said, God will execute such an horrible iudgement, and it shall come with such violence, as if a whirlewind passed through high places, or through a dry land, or some desert.

He saith, *by the way of the daughter of my people*: as if he should say, the wind shall haue such a passage as shall directly ceaze vpon Iudeah. Now this is a phrase of speech well enough knowne to them that haue been but meerly read in the Prophets, when he puts *the daughter of the people*, for the people themselus. This wind then, *shall passe directly towards Iudeah*. Afterwards hee adds, *neither to fanne nor to cleanse*: for it is the manner of husbandmen to fanne their corne in the ayre, so as you shall see the chaffe flie abroad, and be purged out by the wind. But the Prophet affirmes, that this wind shall *neither fanne nor cleanse*. Why so? *Because* (saith he) *it shall be too boysterous*. In a word, his meaning is, that God shall bee so displeased with the Iewes, that he will not chastise them with such gentlenesse and moderation as in times past. For God had already corrected the Iewes often, but hee hitherto carried himselfe in such wise, as hee alwayes performed (as it were) the part of a good physition; in regard his meaning was, to procure the saluing and curing of the peoples vices. But in as much as none of his corrections had done them any good, therefore the Prophet now affirmes, *that God will come in wrath and indignation, which shall not scrile as before, to cleanse and purge them, by sending away their scourings into the wind; but wholly to consume*

Daughter of my people, taken for the people themselues.

God is desirous as a good Physition, to cure the vices of people by sparing them, but when this lenity is abused, he will fall to extremities.

consume and destroy whatsoeuer appertained to the people.

And therefore he adds (for these two verses depend one vpon another) *a wind more full* (saith he) or more perfect *than those, shall come.* Others translate, *shall come from those places.* But it is to be taken rather as we haue turned it; namely, *that this wind shall bee more terrible than other winds, which were wont to winnow the corne, in separating it from the chaffe, or to purge the earth.* The wind then shall be much more violent: *and it* (saith he) *shall come to me. I doubt not but God himselfe speakes this.* Others thinke the Prophet heere represents the whole body of the people; and expound it, that a wind shall come rushing in vpon them: but this exposition is vnapt; and the text it selfe confutes it. For that which followes next in the Prophet would not agree: *now will I pronounce iudgements with them.* It is *God* then, who in the person of a iudge, pronounceth that a wind shall come vp *at his command*, to scatter and ouerthrow the whole land; but not to purge or cleanse it. And thus he shewes how the Caldeans shall not come vp by their owne proper mouing, but shall be ready to accomplish & put that in execution, which God himselfe shall enioyne them: as if he should say, *I my selfe am the author of all the euils which shall happen to the Iewes. It shall come to me* then, that is, *it shall bee ready to obey my commandement.*

See Isa. 45.7. and Amos 3.6.

Lastly, by way of exposition he adds, *Then will I speake iudgements with them. To speake iudgements*, is as much to say, *as to performe the office of a iudge*, or to call to iudgement, or to summon and cite one to make his answere in the place of iustice: as it is also said, that Kings speake iudgements, when they cause men to yeeld an account. In a word, Gods meaning heere is, that hitherto hee hath forborne the Iewes but too long: but in regard hee sees the patience he hath vsed, is not onely fruitlesse, but that they are become so much the more stubborne and rebellious: he testifies he will now play the part of a iudge with them, to punish their vngodly courses. Now it followes.

Chap. 52.9. See chap. 1.16.

Vers. 13. *Behold, he shall come vp as a cloud, and his chariot shall be as a whirle-wind: his horses are more swift than the Eagle: woe vnto vs for we are destroyed.*

HEre the Prophet in the shutting vp of his prophesie, expresseth the greatnesse of Gods vengeance. Now hee vseth two similitudes to terrifie and awaken the Iewes. He saith, *the chariots of God shall come vp as clouds, and as a whirle-wind*; and then, *that his horses shall be swifter than the Eagles*. Touching *the clouds, and whirle-wind*, and likewise *the Eagles* (for there is one and the same reason in the three similitudes) no doubt but the Prophet meant to signifie, that Gods vengeance should come speedily: and yet there is some difference. *Wee see how in lesse than the twinkling of an eye, the clouds are gathered together, and couer (as it were) all the heauens.* Now this falles out *when some whirle-wind ariseth* and troubleth the ayre. Thus then, when hee compares the chariots of God *to clouds*, and to *a whirle-wind*, it is as much as if hee had said, *that the beginning of the calamity shall come suddenly, in regard God shall arise ere they be aware, whilest it seemes he hath a long time slept.*

Two similitudes

1

Now in saying the horses of God shall be *swifter than Eagles*; his meaning is, that God will not make much ado, neither shall it be difficult for him to bring all to nought in a moment; or at the least, in a very short space to destroy the whole countrey of Iudeah, after hee hath once begun: *for we know how swiftly and nimbly the Egle flies: and yet he saith, Gods horses shall be more swift and nimble than all the Eagles in the world.* Now we see the Prophets meaning. For the Iewes did nothing else but scorne the Prophets threatnings; and amongst other things, this was very rife among them, These Prophets are so hot, that they will not giue vs an houres respit. Well, yet at least let vs be merry whilest wee may, and neuer fill our selues with melancholy muses: for we hope many yeeres

2

will

will passe ouer our heads ere the euill come vpon vs. And are there not such profane ones euen amongst vs at this day, who thinke they may toy with God, as with a little child? For albeit they will not openly scorne the threatnings of the Lord, yet they sholder off the time, and thinke they haue gained much, if they can get the iudgement delayed for a season. This is the reason then, why the Prophet saith, the chariots of God shall now ascend and come vp, euen as the clouds, suddenly meet. Moreouer also, euen as a *whirle-wind* ariseth whilest the aire is calme: so shall the chariots come thundring together. In the last place he adds, they shal be *swifter than the Eagles:* namely, because they shall march on, without any stop or stay at all. 3

Now in the end, the Prophet cries out, *Woe vnto vs, for we are vndone.* He heere *cuts off his speech,*; shewing that the false Prophets, as well as the common people, erred and went astray out of the right way to their owne perdition, whilest they continued snorting thus in their euill wayes, perswading themselues that God would not correct their carelesnesse. He cries out then, that albeit all were besotted and growne past feeling, yet their ruine was certaine. Now it followes.

Vers. 14. *Wash thine heart O Ierusalem from thy filthinesse, lest thou perish. How lang shall thy vaine thoughts remaine in the middest of thine heart,* Others translate, thy dolorous thoughts: others, the thoughts of thy lusts: others, of thine iniquity.

HEre indeed the Prophet begins in expresse tearmes, to exhort the people to repentance. And when hee saith, *let Ierusalem wash her heart, to take away the wickednesse which is therein, that she may be saued:* he shewes, *the Iewes haue none other remedy left them, but to make their peace with God*; which cannot be done, without amendment of life. He said before, that they must *certainly perish,* seeing

See vers. 8. of this chapter.

See vers. 13.

seeing God was angry with them: now hee confirmes that speech, *Purge thine heart from all thine iniquity, that thou maist bee saued*; as if he should haue said, The Iewes are at warres with God: they cannot therefore escape, whilest he is vp in armes to destroy them, nor whilest he shewes himselfe a seuere Iudge, in chastising them for their iniquities: and therewithall also he shewes what course must be taken to come to true repentance: namely, *if she wash her heart from her wickednesse.* For hypocrites take great paines *to appease God with outward ceremonies, and with bodily exercise:* but the Prophet shewes that God regards none of these things, vnlesse they turne vnto him in good earnest, and without faining. He signifies then, *that the beginning of repentance hath his seat in the affection of the heart.* Now we haue the Prophets meaning.

The way to come to true repentance.

The beginning of repentance hath its seate in the heart.

And yet it is ill argued of them which hence would inferre, that repentance is the cause of our saluation, because *God bids Ierusalem to wash her heart* from her wickednes, that she may be saued. The Papists I grant strengthen themselues with such places, to establish their free-will, and to shew that our sinnes are abolished, and we redeemed from the punishment of them, by our satisfactions. But this is but a brauado, without any substance: for the Prophet disputes not heere about the cause of our saluation; but (as I haue said) he onely shewes that men are growne too senseless and careless, when they looke to bee in rest, whilest they haue warre with God, hee being armed to take vengeance on their iniquities. The question heere then is not, whether the sinner may redeeme himselfe out of Gods hands by repentance: The Prophet meant onely to say, *we can looke for no safety nor tranquility vnlesse God be appeased with vs:* and therewithall also testifies, *that God cannot shew himselfe gracious, vnlesse wee repent; yea and that in good earnest, and from the pure affection of the heart.*

Repentance no cause of saluation.

Let him neuer dreame of rest to himselfe, that is at variance with God.

Afterwards he adds, *how long shall thy wicked thought*

remaine

remaine in the midder of thee? Heere he taxeth the hypocrisie of the Iewes, in saying, that whatsoeuer excuses they pretend, yet they are *conuicted before God*, and that all their euasions should stand them in no stead, in regard God dives into the secretest imagination of the heart. Now he speakes very pertinently, *for he had to deale with hypocrites, who thought God tooke pleasure in their ceremonies.* Moreouer, by opposing their cauills, they thought to haue been absolued, in regard they could not be condemned before earthly Iudges. The Prophet scornes all these gauds, when he saith, *How long shall thy vaine cogitations remaine in thee?* that is to say, *albeit the whole world should acquit and iustifie thee, what benefit shouldest thou reape by it? for thy vaine thoughts remaine still in the middest of thee*: that is, in the depth of thine heart. Now God sees and discernes them, because nothing is hid from his eyes. Thinke not then, that you shall gaine ought by all your outward shewes, neither by any of your vaine excuses, for God searcheth the hearts: *Let not* therefore *thy wicked thoughts abide in the middest of thee.*

Hee calles them *vaine cogitations*: The Hebrew word sometimes signifies a substance, and sometimes vertue or power: also sometimes it signifies griefe, and sometimes vanity, or trouble. As touching this present place, I doubt not but it signifies, molestation, or vanity. For to expound it concupiscense, as some doe, I see not how the word will beare it. But either of the two expositions which I haue set downe, will agree very well: although the latter agrees yet best of all. How long then shall thy vaine thoughts remaine in the middest of thee; to wit, whereby thou deceiuest thy selfe. *For in regard God held his iudgements in suspense, the Iewes verily thought they should escape his hands.* Moreouer, in regard *of their effect*; they were thoughts of *molestation*, and trouble. For what other thing in the end could betide them, but to feele and know, that those who thus abuse and deceiue themselues, doe nothing else but prouoke Gods wrath to wax

so much the more hot against thē. Wheras some expound it, Cogitations of griefe, in the actiue signification, in regard the Iewes had done their neighbours many wrongs and outrages, it agrees no more than the former, but it also is vnapt. I nothing doubt than, but the Prophet heere mentions those *false hopes* which the Iewes conceiued in their heads, which caused them to grow the more obstinate and rebellious against God, in such sort as they abandoned all feare of punishment.

The Prayer.

Almighty God, since thou vouchsafest to call vs, yea and daily to allure vs to repentance, and that therewithall wee haue also the testimony of our owne consciences to conuince vs, as hauing many wayes prouoked thy iust vengeance against vs: suffer vs not any longer to remaine hardened in our vices, nor yet that our hearts may grow obstinate through vaine deceits: but Lord let vs suffer our selues to be subdued by thy word, and that we may giue ouer our selues to thee, with such purity and sincerity of heart, that for the whole course of our liues we may mind nothing more, than to exercise our selues in the meditation of that newnesse of life which thou requirest of vs: that being consecrated and set apart vnto thee, both in heart and life, we may endeuor to glorifie thine holy name, vntill we be made partakers of that glory which thou hast purchased vnto vs by the bloud of thine only Sonne Iesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE

THE SIXTEENTH LECTVRE, WHICH IS THE THIRD VPON THE fourth Chapter.

Vers. 15. *For a voyce declareth vnto Dan, and publisheth calamity*, or punishment: others translate, iniquity *from mount Ephraim.*

THe Prophet repeats that which he said before; namely, that the Iewes are destinated to perdition by their obstinacy, in regard they had too often, and sundry wayes prouoked God to wrath against them: neither would they giue place to his holy admonitions which he sent them by his seruants the Prophets, in offering them grace and forgiuenesse, vpon their true repentance. But whatsoeuer we read heere in this verse, represents (as it were) to the life, that calamity which was now at hand, in regard the Prophet sets that before their eyes in figures, which could not bee expressed in bare words. He saith, *the voice declareth vnto Dan:* now this was the vtmost City bordering vpon the North. And hee said before, that from this part a plague should come; that is to say, *from the North*, because God had chosen the Chaldeans to be the executioners of his vengeance. For that cause he now saith, *the voice may bee heard from Dan*: not that the armie was now ready to giue the onset vpon the Iewes: but *Ieremiah* speakes heere by the spirit of prophesie, as if he represented the iudgements before the eyes of the Iewes, which yet they thought would neuer haue come to passe. For we told you yesterday, that when God spares the hypocrites for a little space, they become the more obstinate, and doe the more boldly insult

See vers. 6.

ouer the Prophets. For this cause *Ieremiah* seeing he had to deale with blockish persons; it was necessary for him *to adorne his doctrine with such figures as might fitly decypher, that the iudgement of God was neere*; which yet little affected the Iewes. He saith then, *let the voice bee heard from Dan, and let trouble*, or punishment, or calamity, *bee published*: for that other reading whereof I aduertised you, is very harsh, in regard the Hebrew word properly signifies Iniquity: but it is also fitly taken for punishment. Notwithstanding when the Prophets vse this word, they thereby meane, that God sends not affliction and calamities vpon men, *without iust cause*: and therewithall they also shew, that the matter and cause thereof, *is in the iniquities and sinnes of men*. *Calamity* then, *comes from mount Ephraim*, which quarter was neerest to the Tribe of Iudah, and to the City of Ierusalem. But this is all one as if *Ieremiah* had said, God now thunders from heauen: you shall therefore gaine nothing by stopping your eares: for albeit you are now deafe, yet shall Gods vengeance forth with come to light, and that with the greater noyse and astonishment. It followes.

Verse 16. *Make ye mention thereof among the Gentiles, and publish it in Ierusalem; Behold the* * *scouts come from a farre country, and send their cry vpon the Cities of Iudah.*

* or, those that besiege her.

THe interpreters expound the beginning of this sentence diuersly. Some translate, Let the Gentiles come into your mind; thinking the Prophet saith this, because there were many among the Gentiles, which published Gods vengeance. They take this place then, as if *Ieremiah* sent the Iewes to the Gentiles, saying, Ye are vnworthy that God should send you ordinary teachers, in regard you haue esteemed whatsoeuer they haue told you, but as meere tales and fables. But because the verbe is in the coniugation of *Hiphil*, it ought rather to bee

read

read, *Remember yee.* And yet there are others, which expound thus, Make mention of the Gentiles: that is to say, publish it; that the Chaldeans are approching with all diligence to lay the land waste; to ruinate the Cities of Iudah, and to bring the people to nothing. But there is a third exposition, which (as I take it) agrees better: word for word it is, *make ye mention of the Gentiles: Behold, publish it vpon Ierusalem.* Why so? Truly the Prophet saw well enough that he lost but his time, in speaking to so dull, and senseleſſe a people, and that the same their senseleſneſſe had brought them to such an obstinacy, that they would neither heare, nor vnderstand ought. Hee turnes his speech *towards the Gentiles* then, and saith, *Aduertiſe ye the Gentiles.* As if he should say, it is a long while agoe since I admoniſhed this people: beſides, God hath schooled them by other Teachers: but what hath all this profited, vnleſſe that they are become so much the more vnteachable? Seeing the case stands thus then, *Cauſe* (saith he) *the Gentiles now to know that which concernes Ieruſalem:* that is to say, *let the Iewes hence-forward heare no more of the calamity and ruine which muſt befall them; but let the Gentiles and profane nations take knowledge of thoſe iudgements of God which are to light vpon their heads.* This exposition is not any way against the scope of the text, but is easie enough, and agrees very well with the Prophets manner of speaking. Hee vouchsafes not then to direct his speech to those ouer whom God had placed him; for it had bin to haue cast holy things to dogs: but he rather directs his speech *to the Gentiles:* as if he should say, *The blind and poore ignorant heathen haue more ſenſe and vnderſtanding, than the people whom God himſelfe hath choſen.* Neither doth this hinder, but the Prophet notwithstanding still continued to exercise his office and function among the Iewes, and that for a long season. For it is a thing vsuall and ordinary with the Prophets, being once inflamed with the zeale of Gods glory, to threaten the people with imminent destruction; and yet they cease

not

not for all that, to goe on constantly in the discharge of their duties, prooving if by any meanes they might bring them home into the right way, who seemed in a manner, to haue been vtterly past recouery.

Those that besiege thee (saith he) *shall come from a farre countrey*: they ordinarily turne it, the Keepers. Others thinking that *Ieremiah* alludes to *Nabuchadnezzars* name; as if the guards of *Nabuchadnezzar* came forth to ruinate and destroy Ierusalem, and the Cities of Iudah. But as I thinke, it is better referred *to besiegers*: which will be yet better cleared by the verse following. Neither see I any reason why some should translate *Guards*: albeit the most (in a manner) are of this opinion. But I take it for those that besiege. *The besiegers* then, *shall come* (saith he) and that *from farre*. This word *farre*, is expresly added, to assure the people that they should not escape, though God had patiently expected their repentance so long a time, as before we noted. For, because God deferred his iudgements, they now thought themselues past all feare of danger: and therefore now he saith, that howsoeuer they saw not the enemy approch with their eyes, nor heard not the noyse of the armie in their eares; yet shall not Gods threatnings be in vaine: for *out of a farre Countrey* can he cause such to come, as shall be the executioners of his vengeance.

And therefore he adds, *They shall send forth their cry vpon the Cities of Iudah*. This also was added for good cause, that the Iewes might thereby know, that no impediment comming betweene, could stay the passage of the Chaldeans from surprising the Cities suddenly, by the voice of their cry. His meaning is indeed, of *the cry which the souldiers make, the better to encourage one another to the battell*: but in regard this often falles out, after they haue gotten the victory, to testifie their ioy and reioycing: he pronounceth definitiue sentence vpon the Iewes, euen as if the souldiers were now making their *cries of triumph*. It followes.

Vers. 17.

Vers. 17. *They shall be about her as the keepers of the field, because shee hath prouoked mee to wrath, saith the Lord.*

HE heere shewes, that the Iewes shall not be able to retire themselues into any corner at all, after God shall cause the Caldeans to come forth; in regard *all the wayes and passages shall be so shut vp, that they shall not bee able to saue themselues elsewhere.* It is as much then, as if he had said, Such a iudgement will shortly befall you, which you can no way auoid, vse all the meanes you can. Doubtlesse it is a wofull thing, when men are driuen to flee all naked (as it were) to shift for their liues any where, and that they be forced to seek their abode among strangers, to liue there in much pouerty and distresse. But the Prophet heere testifies, *that the iudgement which should ouertake the Iewes, shall be so horrible, that they should neither auoid it, nor flee from it, no nor by suffering and sustaining banishments from their countrey, nor by flights:* because God will compasse them in on euery side; as if he had set watchmen to shut vp all passages.

In the next place he adds the reason; *Because they haue prouoked mee to wrath.* The Prophet againe shewes, that the Lord deales not too seuerely with the Iewes, neither is it by chance that they are afflicted with so many and grieuous euils: *but that they receiued the punishment which they iustly deserued, in regard they had prouoked God to bee displeased with them.* For it had not been a matter of so great moment, if the Iewes had apprehended the calamity which suddenly should haue surprized them, vnlesse therewithall they had also knowne that God meant to call them to an account, and to chastise them for their obstinacy. This is the reason then, why he adds, *because shee hath prouoked me to anger:* namely, to the end the Iewes might know and vnderstand, that these chastisements and afflictions came meerly from the immediate hand of God

God. According to which hee now saith:

Vers. 18. *Thy way, and thy workes haue brought this vpon thee; such is thy malice; therefore it is bitter, therefore it pierceth to the heart:* or, although it be bitter, and although it hath pierced thee to the heart.

THe Prophet (as I haue already said) confirmes his doctrine: to wit, that the euils which befell the Iewes, came not to passe by ill fortune, as they say; but that it is God himselfe who calles them to an account; that being touched with his true feare, they might at length returne vnto him: or, if they must needs perish in regard of the outward man, yet at the least they might obtaine fauour after their humiliation, and so be saued in respect of their soules and inward man. Hee saith then, *their actions haue procured them these things*: as if hee should say, *you are not to lay the fault vpon God, nor yet vpon your bad fortune, as you vsually haue done, and as all prophane persons commonly doe.* For they are *your workes* that haue procured you these things. Thus God will performe the office of a iust Iudge: therefore whatsoeuer befalles you, impute it to your owne iniquities. To which purpose in the next place he adds, *such is thy malice.* In a word, he shewes that the Iewes doe in vaine impute their euils either to this or that; for the blame *lies wholly in themselues*, as hauing purchased & obtained this ruine to themselues by their owne impiety and wickednesse.

See 2. Cor. 5. 5.

Against such as cry out of their bad fortune.

In the second part of the verse where it is said, *this pierceth to the heart*, the Prophet thereby signifies, that albeit this *be very bitter, and toucheth to the quicke, and to the depth of the heart*, yet as all this proceeds from themselues, so ought they wholly to ascribe it to to themselues, and to none other. For hypocrites are wont to waile and lament, that they might bring some imputation vpon God, or at the least to blame Fortune. But the Prophet reiects all these cauils; and shewes that howsoeuer the

the affliction which the Iewes suffered, was as a bitter morsell vnto them: yea, although God pierceth, and entreth (as it were) *into the very heart and bowels, yet have they notwithstanding been the authors of all these euils.* Now hee adds,

Vers. 19. *My bowels, my bowels, paine me, round about mine heart: mine heart is troubled*; that is, within me: *I cannot hold my peace, because my soule hath heard the sound of the trumpet*, or, my soule thou hast heard, *and the clamor of the warre is heard*, or, my soule hath heard the clamor of the warre.

I Dare not say, that that which some interpreters suppose is certaine or not; namely, that the Prophet is heere touched with humane passions, in regard hee saw ruine approch towards those of his nation. It is very true indeed, that as oft as the Prophets denounce the heauie iudgements of God, and haue shewed themselues to be seuere therein, that they haue not then cast off all humane affections or compassion. For often they bewaile euen those calamities which themselues threaten: which wee shall also perceiue more clearly in fit place. Thus then the Prophets haue had a twofold passion: for when they are to be Gods heralds to proclaime his vengeance; they 1
must then necessarily forget all humane passions: and yet 2
such a magnanimity notwithstanding hinders them not from retaining an inclination to shew compassion, as they are men: *for it could not be auoided but their bowels must needs yearne within them, in seeing their brethren who were of their owne flesh, to fall into such inexcusable desolations.* But in this place it seemes the Prophet laments, not so much in respect of the peoples calamity, as that he meant to vse certaine *figures, whereby he might rouze vp and awaken the peoples dulnesse, because he saw they were growne altogether so senselesse as they were destitute of Gods true feare, neither could they be touched with any shame or blushing.* The peo-

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ple then being become thus peruerſe, *Ieremiah*, and the reſt of Gods ſeruants were conſtrained to vſe certaine ornaments and deckings of ſpeech, *and not to teach after an ordinary manner, but with violence and vehemency, that they might awaken the peoples drowzie conſciences.*

For this cauſe it is that he cries now, *My belly, my belly paines me.* For we ſhall ſee in other places where the Prophet laments on this manner, when he hath to deale with Babylon, Edom, and others that were the Iewes enemies. And why? Sure it is the Prophet was not affected with any particular ſorrow, when he foreſaw their deſtruction; neither when God himſelfe had alſo ſhewed and aſſured him that the like ſhould befall the profane nations, who had with a deadly hatred perſecuted the elect and holy people. But as I haue ſaid, in regard men *make ſmall account* of any of thoſe threats which he thunders from heauen; it is more than needfull to vſe ſuch forcible ſpeeches to rouze them withall. Thus I vnderſtand this place then, to wit, *that the Prophet mournes not heere for the particular reſpect he had of the peoples calamitie; but being mouued, yea and pricked forward by the ſpirit of propheſie; he now amplifies that by way of figure, which hee vttered before in plaine tearmes; becauſe he ſaw they regarded that but a little, or at leaſt it was inſufficient to touch them to the quicke.* My bowels (ſaith hee). I grant that ſorrow might very well haue pierced *euen into his bowels, in regard he was a member of the ſame body*: but we are heere to examine to what end this ſpeech is thus vttered. It ſerues not then, to manifeſt a particular affection, *but rather to diſcouer the greatneſſe of the puniſhment*: that ſo the doctrine (as we haue ſaid) might touch their hearts, who ſcorned the iudgements of God.

He adds, *trembled*, or ſounds. For the word he heere vſeth, ſignifies to ſound: for which cauſe alſo, by way of ſimilitude, it is taken to make a tumult. He ſpeakes then of the trembling or beating of his heart, which is wont to happen by reaſon of ſome ſudden feare. But he calles it

a ſound

a ſound or tumult: as if he ſhould ſay, *I am not maſter of my ſelfe, neither can I hold my ſelfe within compaſſe; for God hath affrighted me, with an horrible aſtoniſhment.*

Further he adds, *I cannot be ſilent, becauſe my ſoule hath heard the ſound of the trumpet:* or, *becauſe thou my ſoule haſt heard the ſound of the trumpet,* or, *the alarme of the battell.* For the Hebrew word heere vſed, ſignifies rather a battell. *He ſaith then, hee cannot be ſilent, becauſe the cry ſounds and rings in his heart.* Whence alſo we gather, that he is not touched with the ſenſe of humane affection; but rather doth that which God had enioyned him. For he was choſen as an *herald of armes, to proclaime open warres on Gods part, againſt the Iewes;* whereof notwithſtanding they made light account, though they heard the ſound of the alarme. Some thinke this word *ſoule,* is heere taken for the ſpirit of propheſie, in regard the trumpet now ſounded not, neither was the alarme of the battell as yet heard. Their opinion then is, that there is heere an antitheſis, in that *Ieremiah* heard not the ſound of the trumpet with his eares, but onely conceiued the ſame in his heart, as being aduertized of Gods ſecret iudgement. But whether this ſubtilty will agree with the Prophets words or no, I know not. Mine opinion therefore is, that *Ieremiah* meant, without all peraduenture, to let them vnderſtand, that *he ſpake ſeriouſly*; in regard he perceiued Gods iudgement and vengeance as certainly to ſeaze vpon them, as if he had ſeene it before his eyes. Neither was this of ſmall importance, to giue ſo much the greater authority to his doctrine: that ſo the Iewes might know he was not like thoſe ſtage-players, who are skilfull enough in repreſenting and playing their part whileſt they are vpon the ſcaffold, or ſtage, as if he meant onely to act that which God had cauſed him to ſee and know; but that he was his ambaſſadour in ſuch wiſe, *that himſelfe was ſeized with feare, hearing in his ſpirit and heart the noiſe of the battell, and the ſound of the trumpet.* It followes.

Verſ. 20.

Vers. 20. *There is affliction called vpon affliction; for the whole land is wasted: my tabernacles are suddenly destroyed,* and *my curtaines in a moment.*

HE prosecutes the same argument still; but hee amplifies this terrour by a new circumstance; namely, God so heapes *euill vpon euill*, that the Iewes shall *wonderfully deceiue themselues*, if they hope that their calamities will sone be at an end. When he saith, *affliction vpon affliction*, he signifies *that the end of one miserie, shall be the beginning of another*. Which also is a thing very tedious and irksome to such poore wretches as are in distresse: for they euer thinke, Our calamities will not alwayes endure. Why so? They imagine that God will satisfie himselfe with inflicting some light punishment, like a storme or tempest, that suddenly passeth ouer, and vanisheth away: and they no sooner feele a little release, but they thinke all is husht; and so by and by returne to their old byas againe, playing mock-holy-day with God; as if now they were quite and cleane escaped his hands. This is the cause why the Prophet now saith that their calamities shall still be encreased, and that for a long time together, so as they are not to looke for any end of them *till the Iewes be vtterly wasted.*

The reason why God adds affliction to affliction.

But in saying the calamities *are called*, he giues them to vnderstand, and that in few words, that God is set vpon his tribunall seate, who after he hath inflicted some light chastisements vpon men for their sinnes, soone after adds more waighty punishments: & lastly, seeing them to grow desperate in their rebellion, he also continues his strokes so long, till at length he vtterly destroyes those that will not amend. *Affliction vpon affliction is called.* But how? *Truly because the whole land is destroyed.* And then, *my tents are suddenly destroyed*: Lastly, *my curtaines in a moment are cast downe.* The most receiued opinion is, that the Prophet heere compares the strong and defenced Cities,

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to tents & courtaines, ý he might take from the Iewes that fond confidence which made thē to burst as it were with pride; thinking such Cities should serue them as bulwarks & fortresses to repulse their enemies. And thus they think the Prophet meant to depriue them of this vaine hope, in calling their strong cities by ý name of tents or tabernacles. There are others also who imagine, that he alludes to the city of Anathoth, the place of the prophets byrth, or to the maner of life which mē led there. And to say the truth, *Ieremiah* vseth often such phrases of speech as agrees to shepheards, and keepers of cattell: that is to say, such a stile as is somewhat rude and dis-ioynted: it shall not bee greatly amisse then, if wee say hee speakes heere as in the person of a shepheard, when hee mentions these tents. Notwithstanding both may stand very well; namely, that he speakes like vnto shepheards, and keepers of beasts; and yet in the meane while hee meant to shew, that the Iewes did but dally, if they thought to escape vnder colour of those strong Cities which stood vpon their borders, as if thereby their enemies could bee beaten backe. But wee may also expound it very well thus: to wit, that not the least corner should escape, in regard the enemie would enter into the deserts; yea, that he would wast and breake downe euen the poore corages, which in all likelihood might well haue been spared, seeing they were remote from neighbours. Now he saith, *suddenly and in a moment*; that the Iewes might promise to themselues nō truce: as if it might be delayed from day to day; or as if they had any respite giuen them to make their peace with God. It followes.

Vers. 21. *How long shall I see the standard?* How long *shall I heare the voyce*, or the sound *of the trumpet?*

HEre he shuts vp ý speech which we said, he adorned and enriched with figures, that he might the better touch those to the quicke who were slow & dull of hearing. *See Vers. 19.*

ring. And yet he also confirmes that which he said in the beginning of the former verse: *Affliction vpon affliction is called.* By another phrase of speech then, he repeats that which he said before, when he now adds, *how long shall I see the standard, &c.* as if he should say, *you greatly deceive your selues, if you thinke the enemie shall retire himselfe home into his countrey, after he hath remained a while in the land, and spoyled some part thereof.* For the warre shall be of long durance, and God shall still prolong the afflictions, *so as the sound of the trumpet shall continually ring in your eares, and your eyes shall daily see the banners displayed, yea euery moment.* Now we haue attained the Prophets meaning.

1 First hee shewed, that albeit their enemies were farre off from them, yet they should post towards them in a moment, as we heard yesterday, in vers. 13. Gods horses shall be swifter than all the Eagles in the world. In the second place, he mentions the continuance of the warres.

2 Vers. 20.21. For it was very expedient, that this also should be manifested to the Iewes: namely, that as they had walked on in their rebellion and contempt of God, in a continued course: so his vengeance should not last for a day or two onely, but it should presse them in such wise, that it should euer pursue them. And by the way let vs note, that the world at this day is no lesse dull of hearing, than were the Iewes in their time: it is not enough then, that we cite and summon the wicked and contemners of God, before his iudgement seat: but we ought also *to vse the like figures,* and phrases of speech which the Prophet heere vseth, to terrifie; yea to force and constraine them to come to some remorse, albeit they for their parts doe the vtmost and that by all the meanes they can, to benumme their owne consciences, and to make themselues insensible, that they might the more easily contemne God, and all godlinesse. Gods seruants must presse the hypocrites thus continually, that both they, and the open wicked ones, may be awakened. It followes.

Vers. 22.

Vers. 22. *For my foolish people haue not knowne me, they are children without vnderstanding, and haue no knowledge: They are wise to doe euill: but to doe well they haue no knowledge.*

THe Prophet againe shewes, that the cause of all their euils, proceeds from themselues; that they might not foolishly impute the same vnto any other. He saith then, *my people is foolish.* He speakes heere *in the person of God:* for by and by it followes, *they haue not knowne me*; which can no way agree vnto *Ieremiah.* God then complaines heere, of the *folly of his people*; whom he calles *his*, not by way of honour, but rather to redouble their reproch. For what was more vnseemly, than for *Gods people*, whom he hath chosen as his owne peculiar inheritance, *to be void of knowledge and vnderstanding?* What else was Gods purpose in chusing and adopting the children of *Abraham*, but that they should be *as burning lights, to manifest the doctrine of saluation to all the world?* What nation is there (saith *Moses*) so noble in all the world, to whom the gods come so neere, and so familiarly, as the Lord thy God doth? Herein consists *thy knowledge and wisedome*, as it followes in Deut. 4. 6. 7. Thus God here shewes, that it is a thing most prodigious, which all the world also ought to abhorre, when he giues *his people* heere the title of *a foolish people.* As if he should say, Is it possible that this people whom I haue chosen to be a guardian of my couenant touching euerlasting saluation, to whom I haue vouchsafed the honour to instruct them by my word; is it possible I say, that this people should be so insensible, as wilfully to cast themselues into perdition? *It is a foolish people then, in regard they haue not knowne me.* *See vers. 18.*

Now heere he shewes what is the cause of *this folly*, to wit, *they knew not God.* For our whole wisedome consists in the knowledge of God. But thus God lets them know that their folly is no way excusable. Why so? He

made himselfe so familiarly knowne vnto the Israelites, that as *Moses* saith, they needed not to aske, Who shall ascend for vs into heauen? or who shall descend for vs into the depth? For they had the word fast by them, euen in their mouth, and in their heart, Deut. 30. 12. 13. 14. In regard then, that God had in so gracious a manner, manifested himselfe vnto the Iewes, he iustly complaines, *that they knew him not*. Wee haue two poynts to note heere then; first, God specifies what this folly is, namely, that *his people knew him not*. Whence we haue to gather, that wee are then said to be *truly wise*, when wee render to God his due honour; and are then iustly esteemed *fooles and vnwise*, whilest we cease to stay our selues in him. That is one poynt. Moreouer, we ought to know that all pretense of ignorance heere falles to the ground, whilest God thus manifested himselfe to this people. And may not the same be said vnto vs? Yes verily, God at the last day may iustly reproch vs, that we haue been *fooles, and vnwise*, if we haue not knowne him: for this is our wisedome also, as I said erewhile. Moreouer, here is no place to bring in any pretext of ignorance; for God hath not spoken to vs in secret. To be short, God conuinceth the Iewes of ingratitude, and of wilfull malice in telling them *they knew not*. And we at this day deserue (as I haue said) a much greater condemnation, so as the punishment ought to be doubled, if we *know him not*, to whom God hath so familiarly reuealed himselfe, and to whom in so gracious a manner he represents himselfe.

Lastly he adds, *that they are witlesse, and without any sense or vnderstanding*. The oppositions which are heere in the Hebrew text, haue greater waight than in the Greeke or Latine. In Greeke or Latine, this manner of speech would haue little grace, if one should say, This is a foole, and not wise. For it seemes the latter member doth somewhat diminish that which was said in the first. But the Hebrewes haue their manners of speaking proper to themselues: for thus they signifie, that this people is so farre

The Hebrewes haue their manner of speech proper to themselues.

farre destitute of vnderstanding, that there is *not so much as a dramme of sound knowledge in them.* Those who are fooles and witlesse, will yet haue some sparkes of vnderstanding, though neuer so small: and thence came that prouerbe, That fooles often tell the truth. But *Ieremiah* on the contrary, meanes that the Iewes were not onely fooles and senseleſſe, but so depriued of all iudgement and discretion, that they resembled euen the insensible stones, or bruit beasts: so as there remained neither wit, nor humane reason in them. We will now deferre the rest till some other time.

The Prayer.

Almighty God, for as much as thou hast not for once only lighted vp vnto vs the lampe and light of thy heauenly doctrine, but daily calleſt vs to to that ſaluation which thou haſt ſet before vs: giue vs grace we neither ſhut our eyes, nor ſtop our eares, nor yet lie ſnorting in our vices. But as it pleaſeth thee on thy part carefully to allure vs to come vnto thee; ſo grant we alſo may haſten to thee with all our might, that from ſtrength to ſtrength wee may continue on our Christian race, approching euery day nearer and nearer to the marke at which we aime, till at length wee attaine the poſſeſſion of that heauenly kingdome, which thou haſt purchaſed for vs by the blood of thine onely begotten Sonne Ieſus Christ. Amen.

THE SEVENTEENTH LECTVRE, WHICH IS THE FOVRTH VPON THE fourth Chapter.

Vers. 23. *I beheld the earth, and loe it was desolate and deformed; and the heauens, and they had no light in them.*

24 *I beheld the mountaines, and loe they trembled, and all the hils moued.*

25 *I beheld, and loe, there was no man; and all the birds of the heauen had taken their flight.*

26 *I beheld, and loe, the fruitfull region*, or Carmel, *was a desert, and all her Cities destroyed, before the face of the Lord, and before the face of his fierce anger.*

THe Prophet heere by sundry sorts of figures, amplifies the terrour of Gods vengeance, *that he might awaken the Iewes*; who were become vtterly senseleſſe and careleſſe. For he makes no idle repetitions, when foure times together he saith, *he beheld*. Hee might as well at once haue mentioned, *the earth, the heauens, men, mountaines, and fruitfull places*: but hee saith, that *which way soeuer he turned his eyes, as if hee had viewed the foure quarters of the world; on euery side there appeared horrible and fearful signes of Gods wrath and displeasure, which threatned the Iewes with an vtter waſt*. Neither is it any maruell that the Prophet vseth *such vehemency*. For wee know with what contempt men are wont to entertaine all Gods threatnings, vnleſſe they bee indeed soundly awakened. Which manner of teaching ought not to bee strange vnto vs. For hee that is but meanly read in the Prophets, may easily obserue, that they insist much vpon this poynt; to wit, in rouzing the hypocrites and contemners

temners of God: who as they haue a stiffe necke that will not bow; so according to the hardnesse of their hearts, they will not be moued with any punishment wherewith they be threatened. But yet this place, among many other, is very notable: and therefore ought wee so much the more diligently to ponder that heere, which the Prophets words import.

First hee saith, *hee beheld the earth.* Hee vseth the very same words which *Moses* vseth in the history of the worlds creation. For before the earth was formed, hee saith, it was a thing that lay waste, and as a confused chaos, without any forme or shape at all; as hauing no beauty in the face thereof, to allure the eyes of the beholders to gaze vpon it. It is as much then, as if hee had said, Gods wrath and vengeance hath caused that distinct and comely order so to vanish away; that nothing but an vtter confusion remaineth. And thus he amplifies the outrage and enormitie of their sinnes: as if hee should say, They had so farre run riot, that thereby they had peruerted all the whole frame of the world, and (as it were) mingled heauen and earth together; so as nothing but an vtter vastation of all things appeared now euery where.

Ieremiah alludes to the Chaos of the world, before God made a distinction of things therein.

Whereas he saith, *there was no light:* he signifies, that the light of the Sunne and Moone was (in a manner) darkened and put out; in regard men were vnworthy to enioy such a fauour as that is from God: *as if the Sunne and Moone had been ashamed,* to be the witnesses of so many foule iniquities. Wee haue now the summe of the Prophets meaning as touching the first verse. *I looked* (saith hee) *vpon the earth, and behold, I perceiued nothing but an horrible wracke and confusion:* that is, there was no forme nor distinction that might giue the beholders any contentment; because the Iewes had ouerturned the creation of the world (as it were) by their sinnes. *I also beheld the heauens, and there appeared no light in them:* for the Iewes by their sinnes deserued to be depriued of that blessing which he hath put in the Sunne, and in the Moone.

For what a singular fauour of God is it, that he hath ordained so noble and excellent creatures to doe vs seruice? In a word, the Prophet meant to say, *that there appeared signes of Gods wrath, both in the heauens, and in the earth*; thereby to terrifie the world, as if hee meant to make hauoke of all. This manner of speech is also vsuall in the rest of the Prophets, but especially in *Ioel* 2. 2. where there is a notable place to this purpose. And albeit they are hyperbolicall speeches, yet doe they not exceed measure, if we consider well what a dulnesse and slothfulnesse there is in mans nature. For vnlesse God arme *the heauens and earth against vs*; vnlesse he manifest by some euident signes, that he is about to withdraw all his fauors from vs; what doe we else but scorne all his threatnings, as we said erewhile?

Vers. 24. From *the heauens*, *Ieremiah* descends *to the mountaines*, and saith, *they trembled, and that all the hils mooued*, or were shaken. Others translate, destroyed; but I see no reason of it. For doubtlesse the Prophet confirmes the same thing still, by new phrases of speech. Now as he testified *that the mountaines trembled*; so he also adds, *that the hils shooke*. Yea, and the proper signification of the verbe requires, that we so translate it. Now the reason why he mentions *the mountaines and hils*, is plaine and euident: for in these places there is a greater stability perceiued, than in the plaines, *in regard the mountaine, for the most part, are replenished with quarries, and are founded vpon rockes*. So as though all the world should faile and tumble on heapes, yet it seemes *the mountaines* are so well founded, that there is no appearance at all of any motion. And yet the Prophet saith, that euen these *trembled, and the little mountaines shooke*.

Vers. 25. In the third vision he speakes of a solitarinesse: for hee saith, *he saw no man; and all the birds of the heauens were flowen away*. We know the first and chiefest ornament of this world consists in men, and other liuing creatures. For to what end should the earth haue such fruitfulnesse be-

The worlds chiefe ornament.

stowed

stowed vpon it, as to bring foorth such diuersity, and such a quantity of good things, *but in regard of the vse of man and beast?* Although then that trees, herbs, and an infinite variety of fruites, doe giue a wonderfull ornament and beauty to the earth, yet doth her chiefest beauty consist in being repleniſhed *with men and beasts.*

Vnder this word *birds*, the Prophet also includes all the rest of the earthly creatures, by the figure *Synecdoche*; vnder it comprehending one kind for the whole. He saith then, *that the earth was emptied of her inhabitants.*

The fourth vision containes yet another thing, namely, *that the fruitfull regions were conuerted into deserts*: albeit I thinke hee speakes properly heere of *Carmel*. For wee know that this quarter of the holy land was thus called, in regard of its fertility. I grant that *Carmel* of it selfe signifies any fruitfull or fat soyle: but (as I haue said) this region was so called, because it abounded with all sorts of fruits. For there were goodly pastures; the fields there also yeelded great encrease; so as this quarter was euery way repleniſhed with all beauties aboue any of the rest. You see the reason now why I willingly vnderstand this place of *Carmel* it selfe: yea and I haue good warrant for it also: for in the next words it followes, *that all the Cities were destroyed*; it is more likely then, that this should be spoken of *Carmel* in particular, then generally of all the regions and fruitfull places. For mine owne part, I thinke the Prophet speakes of *Carmel*, yet so, as he therein alludes to the signification of the word *Carmel*. In this verse also there is a *Synecdoch*, a part taken for the whole: as if he should say, *Carmel*, which excelled in all fruitfulneſse and abundance, yet became like a waſt wilderneſse. When *Isaiah* speakes of the restauration of the Church, he saith, *The desert shall be as Carmel*: as if he should say, Gods blessings shall be so generally and plentifully powred out vpon the whole world, that the deserts shall bee no lesse fruitfull than *Carmel* it selfe; or the regions, which for their fatneſse of soyle, excelled all others. But

Vers. 26.

Isa. 32. 15.

Ieremiah

Ieremiah speaking heere of the curse, saith, *that Carmel shall be as a wildernesse*; and that all the Cities shall be laid wast. Why so? *Because of the face of the Lord, and because of the kindling of his ire.* Others translate, his furie: which manner of speech hath his waight also. For we said erewhile, that if God thunder not, as you would say, to strike a terrour into mens hearts, they are all senseless, neither feele they his iudgements: so as all the threatnings in the world will profit them nothing at all. This is the cause why the Scripture so often speakes of the *fury* or fiercenesse of Gods wrath, or of the kindling of his ire. One of these might haue sufficed. Why then puts he *both*, to wit, *the inflaming* of his *wrath*? Euen because (as I haue said) our obstinacy and hard-heartednesse may be wonne, and broken as with the great blowes of an hammer: otherwise God could not bow our hearts to his feare. This repetition then, ought to serue as a meanes to correct that rebellion which is in all of vs naturally. Not as if God were subiect to disordered passions, as wee know well enough: but in regard we cannot otherwise perceiue how fearfull his vengeance is; this is the cause why it behoueth him necessarily to present himselfe before our eyes as one *angry, and inflamed with wrath and indignation*: for which cause also we see that eternall death is represented out vnto vs *vnder the metaphor of fier*. As touching the summe and substance of this text, no doubt but the Iewes at this time enioyed abundance of all sorts of good things, and were now plunged in their delights. In a word, they enioyed but what they would: and yet the Prophet aduertiseth them *he saw that a farre off*, which these poore pur-blind Iewes *could not see*: namely, *that Gods wrath approched*; that it was ready to seaze vpon them to consume them, and all their riches and abundance; which caused them (as it were) to burst with pride, and to bring vpon them *an vtter vastation*; so as *from aboue, and from beneath*, there should no more bee perceiued *any appearance of beautie, but all deformity and confusion*:

The summe of all.

confusion: euen such as was, before God had ordained that distinction, by separating light from darkenesse; the firmament from the earth: whilest as yet nothing was to be seene but a confused lumpe; in which was comprized the ayre, the earth, without any order at all. Now it followes. Gen. 1. 2.

Vers. 27. *For thus saith the Lord, the whole land shall be desolate, and I will not make an end:* but then the copulatiue *and*, must be resolued into an aduersatiue, *notwithstanding*, I will not make an end, or a consumption.

HEre the Prophet in summe, explaines that which hee meant to say, as touching those foure visions which we haue formerly handled. He denounceth then, *as in the person of God*, that there shall be a maruellous, yea, *a most horrible desolation, throughout the whole land of Iudeah. The land* (saith he) *shall be vtterly desolate*: or, there shall be a desolation throughout the land. Some expound that which followes, as if he somewhat allayed the tartnesse and sharpnesse of his speech. And according to their opinion, there should be a correction heere, which should (as it were) giue some reliefe vnto the faithful, who hoped, and waited to obtaine some grace and mercy, that they might not be vtterly out of heart. And to say the truth, if God should onely threaten, without adding some exception; it were able to swallow vp with feare and dread, an hundred worlds. That the faithfull then might not in such wise be ouer-whelmed with feare, as not to haue their recourse to Gods mercy; it is often added by way of correction, that God will not vtterly consume the earth. The word which the Prophet heere vseth sometime signifies, perfection, but in many other places, it signifies consumption: for the verbe signifies, to perfect, and consume. And there is the same reason for both: and yet it seemes these words should be one contrary to another. Notwithstanding that which is consumed, may properly be called perfect, because it alwayes brings to an end. If this *See verses 23. 24. 25. 26.*

this exposition seeme good, then we now see why hee saith, That he will not make a consumption, albeit he doe seuerely chastise this people: to wit, that he might leaue some hope for the faithfull, lest they should be discouraged: which would haue falle out, had not God promised to be ready to succour them, and to be mindfull of his couenant: vnlesse peraduenture we will reade it by way of an interrogation, thereby to represse the pride and ouerweening of the wicked, that they might the better feele, how none of their vaine boastings should goe vnpunished. As if he should say, And will ye yet say, that I will not make a full end? Now howsoeuer the first exposition containes a doctrine much more ample: yet had I rather take the Hebrew word heere vsed, for *End*; as if he meant to shew, that he will not cease to pursue them with his vengeance euen to the vttermost. Wee also shall meet with the same phrase of speech in the chapter following. The naturall sense then will be this, That God is purposed to wast and consume all at once. I grant when the Prophets speake of Gods iudgements, they speake thereof diuersly. Sometimes they will threaten that all shall goe to wrack, so as there shall bee no appearance of saluation. And yet God in the meane while alwayes reserues some hidden seeds, as it is said in the first, and tenth of *Isaiah*. From which places it is easie to iudge what the Prophets meant to say, by this manner of speech, To make a consumption. For in these places God threatens, that he will make a consumption: and yet by and by after hee adds, this consumption shall bring forth some fruit: that is to say, a remnant shall be exempt out of this consumption. For in other places the Prophets compare the Church to oliues, or oliue trees, when they are beaten or shaken: or to vines, at the time of vintage. For there will alwayes remain one cluster or other which cannot be espied, though all seeme to be gathered: the like also falles out when the oliue trees are shaken; for it is impossible but some oliues will alwayes remaine in the vpper part of the bowes. And

Chap. 5. 27.

Isa. 1. 7. 8. 9. 10. and 10. 22. 23. 25.

Isa. 17. 6. and 24. 13.

in

in the same manner God also saith, he will make such a consumption of his Church, as shall resemble the vintage, or the gathering of oliues, which yet are neuer so cleane stripped (as it were) of their fruit, but there will be some remainders, which shall not be espied. We haue now then (as I take it) attained the Prophets meaning: namely, that such a ruine of the whole nation approcheth, as no mention at all shall afterwards be made of *it*: there shall be seene neither forme, nor beauty of it: which also in effect fell out, when they were led captiue into Babylon. For then the people (at least in respect of the whole body) were brought (as it were) to nought. And thus there was no end.

I willingly confesse that Gods threatnings cannot be auailable to our saluation, vnlesse he forthwith sets before vs the hope of mercy: that being vpheld by this hope, we may haue our recourse vnto him. For whilest wee thinke God to be so angry against vs, that he will not be appeased, we flee from him as much as we can. And this is the cause why despaire makes men fall into a diabolicall frensie. Thence also it comes to passe that the reprobates not onely murmure and gnash their teeth against God, and storme and take on like bedlems; but they would willingly also cast him downe from his seat. It is needfull then, that hope of pardon bee set before vs, that so wee may be touched with true repentance. And therefore in regard this promise is perpetuall; come what come will, yea albeit to our thinking heauen and earth will goe together, so as dangers of death shall seeme to presse vs on euery side: yet ought we alwayes to rest confident in this beleefe, that there shall alwayes *a residue remaine*, according to that which we alleaged out of *Isaiah*, 1. and 10. But in regard this people was not as yet well prepared, nor fit to receiue consolation; the Prophet now mentions ons not this second poynt at all, but speakes onely of the punishment. Now he adds:

See Psal. 46. 1. 2

Isa. 17. 6. and 24. 13.

Vers. 28.

Vers. 28. *Thereupon the earth shall mourne; the heauens shall be darkened on high: for I haue spoken, I haue thought, and cannot repent nee of it, neither will I call backe my word.*

IEremiah prosecutes his former speech, and alwayes *brings in God speaking*; that his words might bee the more forcible. *Thereupon* (saith he) *the earth shall mourne.* He calles that destruction and deformity, *the mourning of the earth*; as hauing respect to that which hee spake in vers. 23. &c. He speaks not then, of the inhabitants of the earth. For those which so expound it, doe very much lessen the vehemency of the Prophets words. He rather attributes *terrour and sorrow heere, to the dumbe and insensible elements*; which is much more passionate, than if hee had plainly said, The inhabitants of the earth should mourne and lament. The same may bee said also of the heauens. And indeed *this latter member* euidently shewes that he speakes not of the inhabitants of the earth, *but of the earth it selfe; which albeit it is vtterly without sense or feeling, yet it seemes it hath a kind of feare and horror, in respect of Gods vengeance.* And thus the Prophet *casts mens hard-heartednesse and senselesnesse in their teeth*, in that they were no whit moued nor smitten with any dread, although they saw signes of Gods wrath manifested against them *from heauen. The earth* then, *shall mourne, and the heauens shall be darkened and troubled*: that is, howsoeuer men remaine insensible, yet shall heauen and earth feele the horribleneſſe of Gods vengeance.

In the next place he adds, *For I haue said it*. Some translate this, as if a relatiue were to be supplied, betweene the two verbes: as if he had said, *For I haue said, that which I thought*, and I wil not repent. But this same abrupt manner of speech sutes well enough. For in the first place *God pronounceth sentence*, which shall abide immutable and vnchangeable. As if he should say, *I haue once for all*

signified

signified by my faithfull seruants the Prophets, what I meant to doe. For the Prophets (as we know) were Gods heralds, to declare and publish his iudgements. And for as much as men for the most part, set light by their doctrine; for as the world at this day is growne to that passe, that it proudly contemnes and scornes al the threatnings that are denounced against it, so fell it out then. *Ieremiah* therefore *brings in God himselfe speaking heere*, as if he had said, You haue despised my messengers, and yet haue they told you nothing, but what my selfe haue enioyned them. *From me* then, hath proceeded *that sentence* which you for your parts ought to haue trembled at. See now in what sense it is that God saith, *I haue spoken*. For he attributes that to himselfe, which the Iewes thought came from the Prophets: and therefore they saw no reason why they might not freely set light by whatsoeuer the Prophets pronounced against them. *It is I* then, *saith God, that hath spoken*. And thus there should be an antithesis betweene God, and the Prophets: as if hee should say, The Iewes gaine nothing at all by snorting thus in their euils, whilest they thinke they haue to doe with mortall men: whereas God himselfe hath commanded and enioyned, his seruants to denounce the iudgement which they scorne so much. And yet lest they should Imagine, God spake onely to affright them with words full of wind (for hypocrites are wont to flatter themselues vnder this pretext, that God speakes not in good earnest, but onely frayes men, as if he had to deale with little children) he saith also, *I haue thought it*. He said before, *hee spake*, that is, as hauing respect to the Prophets; but now in saying he *thought it*; hee meanes, that the prophesies shall manifest their power, wherein God had threatned the Iewes with ruine, *out of his owne secret counsell. This* (saith hee) *is decreed with me*.

Afterward he adds, *I repent not*. In a word he shewes, that the Iewes *are destinated to destruction*, lest they should perswade themselues that God could bee appeased

sed, whilest they went on in their sinnes: because hee was determined to proceed in iudgement against them, and not onely signified the same *by his Prophets*; but had also concluded thereof *in his owne breast*. The word *repentance* is taken heere, for mutation or change. For God is not subiect to repenting, in regard all things are well enough knowne to him: but he speakes after the manner of men, as I said erewhile. And that which followes, remooues away all ambiguity or doubt: for he saith, *I will not turne away from it*: that is, *I will not call backe my sentence*. It followes.

Repentance improperly attributed to God.

Vers. 29. *Euery City shall flee for the voice of the horseman, and of the archer: they shall dig into the thicknesse*; according to others, into the clouds. The Hebrew word signifies a very thicke bush, or thicket: it also signifies clouds: and as I take it, it may bee accepted rather for clouds, because forthwith it followes, *they shall ascend into the rockes*: and then, *euery City shall be forsaken, and no inhabitants shall remaine therein*.

WHen he speakes of *the voice*, or noyse of the horsmen and archers, which shall cause *all to flee*; he signifies that the enemie shal come with such boldnes and fury, that the Iewes shall not dare to meet them, because they shall all be scattered heere and there before one stroke be strucken: for questionlesse hee heere opposeth *the voice*, to blowes. Wee know with what pride the Iewes were possessed: therefore the Prophet scornes this their cursed confidence, wherewith they were so bewitched, that they could no way apprehend Gods iudgements. *The onely noyse* (saith he) *of the enemy shall so terrifie you, that all the Cities shall be forsaken of their inhabitants*, who shall voluntarily yeeld themselues captiue to the enemy: neither shall their walles defend them; nay, the gates themselues shall be set wide open. *All the Cities then shall flee*.

That

That which followes, *they shall ascend into the clouds*, or into the thickets, may bee expounded of the enemies: namely, they shall be so quicke and nimble, that they shall seeme to scale the clouds, and to get vp among the rocks: but I had rather reade it all with a breath thus, The Iewes shall be so affrighted and terrified in their flight, that no clouds shall be so high, to which they will not attaine, because the tops of the highest mountaines are often so couered ouer with groues and thickets, that they are alwayes ouershadowed. This place then may well be thus expounded; to wit, that they shall flee into groues and thickets where much wood is. How euer it bee, the Prophet no doubt speakes heere of places of great heighth: and thus this exposition will be the more firme, if we retaine the word *clouds*. As touching the summe, we see wel enough what his meaning is; namely, that the enemie shal be of such agility, that they shall outstrip the Eagles by their nimblenesse, in comming to subdue and ouerthrow the state of the Iewes: or, according to that which others thinke, which also is most receiued, *The Iewes shall be put to their shifts in such wise, that they shall not onely flee out of their Cities, but shall enter the tops of the highest mountaines, to hide themselues there among the trees and bushes, as amongst the clouds*. Also, *they shall ascend vp vnto the rocks*. Why so? *Because they shall not thinke themselues otherwise in safety, in regard of the inuasions and assaults of the enemie*.

Finally he adds, *That all the Cities shall bee so forsaken, that not so much as one inhabitant shall remaine therein*. Thus we see how the Prophet still aimes at the astonishing of the Iewes, who had no eares to heare withall; whose hearts were now hearts of stone: so that they were not onely senseleese of their euils, but fell to scorning both God and his messengers, euen as they had made a couenant with death, and hell, as it is said in another place. *Isa. 28. 15.*

Vers. 30. *And thou wretched*, or wasted, *what wilt thou doe? Although thou clothest thee with scarlet, though thou deckest thee with ornaments of Gold*; or with neck-laces of gold, as some turne it: *though thou paintest*, or trimmest *thine eyes with colours; yet shalt thou trim thy selfe in vaine; thy louers shall abhorre thee, they shall seeke thy soule.*

THe Prophet heere insults ouer the Iewes, onely to tame their proud and high conceits. For his whole drift is nothing else, but to take downe that ouer-weening of theirs, which made them exalt themselues against God: which hee could not possibly effect, vnlesse hee should aduance his stile somewhat more than ordinary, by decking and adorning his speech with diuersities of figures. This is then (as it were) a witty and pleasant shutting vp of his discourse, when he cries, *And thou wretched, what wilt thou doe?* For the Iewes were yet puffed vp with the contempt of God, neither were their hearts as yet humbled. In regard they yet persisted then, in their so vndaunted a pride; that makes the Prophet cry, *Thou wretched, what dost thou?* As if he should say, Thou flatterest thy selfe in vaine, thou promisest thy selfe succours from other parts; because thine owne estate is desperate. And then hee adds, *Although*: for I interpret this verse with one context, or knitting together of the words; and me thinkes those which separate not the Prophets speech in this verse, are in the right. For to expound it as some doe, Thou deckest thee, thou trimmest thee now, thou deckest thee with ornaments of gold, thou paintest thine eyes with colours, and it is in vaine: this exposition I say, is without any grace: besides, the Prophets scope and drift is by this meanes corrupted. All these words then, haue a dependance one vpon another: there being one principal verbe, to wit, *thou paintest thee to no purpose*. And therefore the Hebrew particle ו ought to be resolued into an aduerbe, *Although*.

Now

Now as touching those who referre all this to the ceremonies wherewith the hypocrites thinke to defend themselues, as with bulwarkes, against Gods iudgments, it is both vnapt, and altogether from the purpose. I grant that ceremonies alwayes serue hypocrites as dens, for such theeues to lurke in, as we shall see hereafter; but as touching this place, the Prophet respects *the ornaments of harlots*; because the people (as we haue often noted before) resembled an adulterous woman, who hauing forsaken her husband, gads vp and downe, and prostitutes her selfe to all commers. For God had couenanted and contracted with thē an holy mariage, which they had falsified. And thus such a disloyalty well resembled *a wanton wife*, that hath broken the faith of wedlock. And because such kind of light huswiues are wont *to trim and paint themselues after an whorish manner*; the better to allure and draw louers by such baits, vnto them: therefore the Prophet now againe tels them, *Thou shalt get nothing by decking thy selfe, albeit thou shouldest clothe thee with scarlet; although thou shouldest glister all ouer with gold, euen from the crowne of the head, to the soles of thy feet; all this shall benefit thee nothing at all. No, though thou shouldest paint thy selfe to the vttermost: this also shall stir vp thy lusts more than the former.* As touching her louers, we know who they were: namely, the Egyptians, and Assyrians. For the Iewes, feeling themselues pressed by the Egyptians, were wont to runne for helpe to the Assyrians: and contrariwise, if the Assyrians molested them, they went to require aide from the Egyptians. Which action of theirs the Prophet compares to the cunning deuices and shifts of harlots: for in gadding thus to and fro, from one to another; what did they else but violate that sacred band of mariage, which was contracted betweene God and them; falsifying their faith which they had plighted vnto him. Thus then the Prophet saith, Although the Egyptians promise thee mountaines, as it falles out with some lustfull louer, that is entised by the beauty and painting of an harlot;

Chap.7.11.

Chapters 2. and 3.

harlot; yet notwithstanding they shall *deceiue thine expectation.* For howsoeuer the Assyrians seeme in outward shew to be ready to succour thee, yet these shall beguile thee also: so as thou shalt bee as an old forsaken harlot, when thou art fallen into extreame necessity. The rest I will deferre till to morrow.

The Translator.

But seeing there remaines but one verse behind, to conclude this Chapter and Lecture withall; I haue rather ioyned, than separated them the one from the other.

WE told you yesterday, what the Prophet meant *by the garment of scarlet, by the ornaments of gold, and by the painting:* to wit, those alluring baits, wherwith Princes, and the people also gratifie one another, when they conclude any league one with another. For whatsoeuer passeth betweene such, for the most part, it is nothing but meere trechery and deceit. But we further told you, that the Prophet besides this, alludes also to that spirituall marriage, by which God ioyned the people of Israel to himselfe. For it was a kind of adultery, thus to affect leagues with strangers; in regard it was a meanes whereby they renounced God himselfe, and contemned his protection. For as the husbands protection ought to satisfie the wife; so also ought the Israelites to haue contented themselues, with fixing and staying of their eyes vpon the Lords helpe onely. But in regard their vaine lusts carried them hither and thither, it is not for nought the Prophet compares them to adulterous women.

Now he saith, *their louers shall abhorre them:* and not onely that, but he saith further, the Egyptians and Assyrians, vpon whom they had builded their vaine hopes should become their *mortall foes. Thy louers* (saith he) *shall abhor thee, and shal seeke thy life:* that is to say, All that power which thou expectest, shal be imployed, as on thy behalfe: *they shall turne it to thine vtter ruine.* It followes.

Vers. 31.

Vers. 31. *Certainly I haue heard the voice of her which trauelleth: affliction*, or anguish *of a trauelling woman*, or of her that trauelleth of her first child; for so much the Hebrew word properly signifies, *the voice of the daughter of Sion: she sigheth, shee shall breake*, spread, or smite *her hands: woe is me now, for my soule fainteth because of those which kill*, or of the murtherers.

Ieremiah by these words yet further confirmes that which we saw before: for he insists not thus long vpon the matter onely for teaching sake; but because hee saw those of his nation grew obstinate, and had hearts as hard as the Adamant. This is the cause why with *so many words* he inculcates, and with such diuersities of speech *repeats*, one and the same thing: which he could not haue deliuered so well in plaine tearmes, nor in a word or two. For oft times the doctrine will little auaile, vnlesse exhortations and threatnings bee added thereunto. You see now to what end, and for what cause hee so often, and in so many words repeates one and the same thing: also why he hath expounded that at large, which we saw before. *I haue* (saith he) *heard a voice, as of her that trauelleth.* Doubtlesse this must bee taken otherwise than the words sound: for it is certaine that *Ieremiah* was no quicker of hearing than the rest: vnlesse wee would say, that being mounted vpon an high turret, he saw Gods iudgement approching a farre off (whereof the people at that time made but slight reckoning) that he might represent the same out vnto others. He saith then, that *he heard*, and that no lesse plainly, than if the thing had been present before him.

He further amplifies the matter, by a word which signifies *anguish*: and then in stead of a woman *that hath had a child*, he puts a woman that trauels *of her first borne*; *where the sorrow is greater*. *Ieremiah* shewes then, that this people which could not bee reclaimed from their sinnes,

should shortly fall into an horrible and extreame misery. But withall he secretly intimates (as also the holy Ghost speakes in other places) that the ruine which was to come, should suddenly come: for when they should say, Peace and safety, then should sudden destruction fall vpon their heads, 1. Thes. 5. 3. So likewise the Prophet in this place shewes, that the Iewes shall get nought by standing in their obstinate courses against God; as if therefore the iudgement were the further off from them: for *sorrow* should suddenly ouertake them: as the labour comes vpon a woman that is iocund, who eates and drinkes merrily; but yet the sorrowes of her trauell will not cease for all that, to take her suddenly in the necke. Euen so our Prophet aduertiseth the Iewes, that they should not thinke to put backe Gods vengeance by their fond confidence and ouer-weening: because the plague should surprize them, and they should feele their ruine ere they were aware.

And yet (as I haue said) hee expresseth their calamity vnder similitudes, and borrowed speeches. *The voyce* (saith he) *of the daughter of Sion shall lament*, or bewaile her case. Some translate in the second person, *Thou shalt lament, and shalt spread, or wring in pieces thine hands*: but this cannot well agree, because it by and by followes, *her hands*, in the third person. He saith then, that *the voice* of the daughter of Sion shall witnesse her great dolour and affliction, because *shee shall lament*. And forthwith adds, *the smiting of the hands*: for the expositors translate the words diuersly. But in regard the Hebrew word signifies properly to rend and teare in pieces, or diuide; I thinke the Prophet meant to expresse *the gestures of a woman that is in labour*. For they are wont thus to smite their hands one against another, and to diuide and intermingle their fingers one within another. Others translate, They spread, in regard the hands are (as it were) cut or diuided, when they are thus lifted or holden vp in the ayre. As touching the matter it selfe, the Prophets meaning

ning is not obscure: for he foreseeth that God will send an horrible iudgement, *so as the Iewes shall lament after an extraordinary manner, as women are wont to doe that are brought into some desperate extremity,*

Lastly, he concludes his speech, saying, *Woe is me now my soule fainteth, &c.* The Prophet meant heere to aduertise them, that howbeit they were all as blind as bats at noone day, *yet he apparantly perceiued Gods iudgements,* whereat they fleered and laughed; or at least the wicked made but a sport of them. He saith, *his soule fainteth,* in regard of those which were slaine; *and yet none were killed.* But by this phrase of speech he testifies, that he already saw those things which were secret and vnknowne (as it were) before his eyes, which made them to be so little moued at them.

The Prayer.

Almighty God, seeing we are lulled so fast asleepe in our sinnes; grant at least that we may be attentiue in hearkening to the examples of thy wrath, which thou hast been pleased to set before our eyes, that at other mens cost, wee may learne to feare thee. Let vs also carefully consider what threatnings thou vsest to draw vs to thy selfe, because thou canst not win vs by idlenesse. Therewithall also cause vs to feele that thou wilt alwayes be mercifull and fauourable to such poore sinners as vnfainedly seeke thee, and conuert vnto thee with their whole hearts. Giue vs likewise to be armed against our sins and infirmities, that we may earnestly striue to dispatch our selues out of Satans nets, which at euery turning hee spreads for vs: that giuing ouer our selues with full liberty to thy seruice, we may take such delight in an holy course, that our chief end may be to please thee in the whole tenour of our life, that so our seruice and obedience may bee acceptable vnto thee, through Iesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE EIGHTEENTH LECTVRE, WHICH IS THE FIRST VPON THE fifth Chapter.

Verſ. 1. *Walke you*, others tranſlate, enquire, or eſpy, or ſeeke, *by the wayes of Ieruſalem; and ſee I pray you*, for the word רוצ is put heere to exhort: in the former verſe, we thought fit to tranſlate it, *Now*: Woe is mee now: *and know, and enquire through the ſtreets*, or in the croſſe wayes where ſtreets meet, *if there you can find a man; if there be any that executeth iudgement*, that is truly, *that ſeeketh the truth; and I will ſpare*, or pardon it.

IN this verſe, as alſo in the reſt following, God ſhewes he is not ouer ſeuere nor rigorous, albeit hee denounceth ſuch extreame calamities againſt his people. Becauſe their wickedneſſe was become vtterly incurable, and therefore hee had no other meanes but this left. For we know what hee often teſtifies in the Scripture, namely, that he is patient, that he waites to ſee if ſinners will come to repentance. Seeing God then euery where extols his clemency, promiſing that he will ſhew mercy to ỹ moſt wicked, if they repent: for as much alſo as hee freely preuents ſinners, it ſhould ſeeme ſtrange, that with ſo great ſeuerity hee riſeth vp in anger againſt his Church. But wee ſee what obſtinacy and peruerſeneſſe there is in the minds of the wicked: and therefore they feare not to make their complaints againſt God, and to call him to an account (as it were) before them: as if hee dealt too rigorouſly with them. For this cauſe then, God now ſhewes, that it was not his fault that the people were not pardoned: for as if

Iſa. 65. 2.
Pſalm. 81, 13.

he

he should haue said, *though I would, yet they would not.* I grant he speakes heere after the manner of men: but thus (as I haue said) he shewes how *hee vsed all meanes possible to reclaime them, before he came to deale thus seuerely with them:* And the words themselues also doe very well expresse as much. *Goe* (saith he) *through the wayes of Ierusalem, and behold I beseech you, know, enquire, in all the corners of the streets.* Ieremiah might in *one word* haue said, *Finde me but one man in the City, and I will willingly spare it.* But God heere permits *the whole world* (as it were with all possible care and diligence) to take a thorow view of of this holy city (for so forsooth she stiled her selfe) Now heere, as also in the verse following, he directs his speech against *Ierusalem.* He might as well haue named *all the rest of the neighbour Cities:* but in regard the sanctity of the whole land seemed then to haue its seat and residence in *Ierusalem*; therefore God doth of purpose turne his speech *to this City*, who yet retained some shew of holinesse, and farre excelled all the rest. He saith then, *enquire, view, and marke diligently, if there be a man. He heere permits mortall men to be Iudges:* as if he should say, Come ye all hither. And if the Iewes will make me odious, and if they will complaine of too much rigour, as if I had dealt inhumanely with them: *Let all that list, iudge, come in, let them aske, let them make a diligent search: and if after search made, there can not a iust, and vpright man bee found, what remaines, but that this City must perish?* For what is to be done with the desperate, must not my iudgements needs light vpon them? Wee haue now the Prophets meaning then: for hee purposed heere to stop the mouthes of the Iewes, and to refell their slanders, that they might no more murmure against God, or find fault with his iudgements, as if he exceeded measure: shewing, that albeit God be enclined to shew them fauour, yet should there be no place left for pardon, for his clemency is by this so desperate an obstinacy excluded, in regard there was *not a man in Ierusalem* that gaue himselfe to integrity

Mat. 23. 37.

grity and vprightneſſe.

Quæſt. Yet a queſtion may heere be asked, namely, wherfore *Ieremiah* ſaith, that a good man could not be found, ſeeing himſelfe was then in Ieruſalem, *who had alſo Baruch for his companion; and ſome others alſo, of whom wee ſhall heare afterwards.* There were ſome true and faithfull ſeruants of God then, and ſome alſo who vnfainedly feared the Lord, albeit they were then thin ſowen: this ſeemes therefore an exceſſiue manner of ſpeech.

Anſw. But wee muſt note, the Prophet hath heere a ſpeciall eye vnto the *multitude*, putting the faithfull (as it were) *apart by themſelues.* Which that it may be made the more euident, that place of *Iſaiah* is to bee noted, ſeale vp the Law, and bind vp the teſtimony *among my Diſciples.* For God ſeeing that the ſending of his Prophet among the the people, had been to little purpoſe, and that his labour was ſpent in vaine among them that were paſt cure: *bind vp* (ſaith he) *the Law among my Diſciples.* Wee ſee heere how God takes in, to himſelfe, *this ſmall number*, in whom there yet remained ſome ſeeds of piety, to wit, in the harts of ſuch, as in whom *religion had been well grounded.* So in like manner, *Ieremiah* reſpects not *Baruch*, nor the reſt that were mingled among this wretched multitude: but he directs his ſpeech (as hath been ſaid) *to the whole body in generall*: the reſt were not onely already ſeparated in Gods ſecret counſell; but alſo by his open and manifeſt ſentence. He truly pronounceth then, *that there was not one.* For we ought to bethinke vs with what kind of people he had to deale at that time. *On the the one ſide hee had the King and his counſell, ſwollen and puffed vp with the promiſes (which yet they falſly laid claime vnto) whereby they imagined it was impoſſible the royal ſeat of Dauid ſhould euer be ouerthrowne. This is my reſt for euer*, Pſal. 132. 14. *As long as the Sunne and Moone endures, they ſhall teſtifie for me, that thy ſeed ſhall neuer periſh*, Pſalm. 89. 37. 38. With theſe and the like titles they armed themſelues: but as hypocrites falſly pretend Gods promiſes; ſo theſe naughty-

Iſa. 8. 16.

I See verſ. 5. ſect. 4.

naughty-packes bragged that God was on their side. Secondly, *Ieremiah* (as we shall see afterwards) *had many conflicts with the false Prophets.* For there were great troupes of them, with which for the most part, the world is alwaies pestered, *the whole estate of the Priesthood was corrupted, and waged battell of set purpose even against God himselfe. The commons were little or nothing better, than the former. Ieremiah* then encounters heere with the *King, and his counsellors, with the false Prophets, the wicked Priests, and with the obstinate and rebellious multitude.* And thus he saith there was *not so much as one*, that was able to appease Gods wrath. 2

To seeke iudgement, is as much as to giue a mans selfe to vprightnesse. For the word *iudgement*, in the Hebrew, signifies vprightnesse, equity, or the rule of well doing. He saith then, *that none exercised or executed iudgement*, nor sought *the truth*. The word *truth*, as in the third verse following, is taken for integrity. As if hee should say, *All are given to falsehood, fraud, and peruerse craftinesse: and therefore he could by no meanes spare the Citie.* For the relatiue *it*, cannot be otherwise expounded, than of Ierusalem. God then saith, he will be mercifull vnto it, if there could a man be found among the Kings counsell, among the Prophets, Priests, or people, but they had all of them with one consent, conspired against all iustice and vprightnesse. 1 2

Vers. 2. *And*, or although *they say, the Lord liueth, yet sweare they in vaine*, or falsly.

THis is added by way of anticipation; and (as you would say) to preuent the Iewes, because (as it is well knowne) they thought to haue the *name of God* (which went glib the in euery ones mouth) as a sufficient couert for their vices. For as much then, as they openly vaunted that they serued the God of *Abraham*; they thought all their wickednesses might well be winked at, in regard of this

this pretext. Now the Prophet *meets with this conceit*, and shewes that such figge leaues are nothing worth, because they onely profaned the name of God with their abuses of it. Moreouer, *Ieremiah* also *aggrauates the fault of the Iewes*: for he shewes that they were vtterly estranged from Gods true feare; not onely in their whole course of life; but albeit some kind of *religion* remained amongst them, yet euen that also was meere sacriledge. It is bad enough when Gods name is buried in obliuion, and when wretched men giue themselues the raines to commit euil, as if they could escape away with it in the darke. But how odious and detestable is such a wickednesse, when they dare thus of set purpose, prouoke God euen to his face? It is this then, which *Ieremiah* heere notes, *Although they say, Iehouah liues, yet* (saith hee) *they sweare falsly*. Now we see the Prophets meaning. For in the first place, hee pluckes the vizard of this vaine confidence from off the faces of the hypocrites, in regard they thought God would easily be entreated, if so be they only *pretended his name*. And yet they considered not how pretious the name of God was: and thus they cared not lightly to take vp the sacred name of God in vaine. Now the Prophet not onely condemnes the hypocrisie of the Iewes, but (as I haue said) he aggrauates their fault, in regard they made no conscience in prostituing the holy name of the Lord to all purposes, and to be at vtter defiance with it. For this is done, when wee abuse the name of God, by *vaine swearing*.

When he saith, *Although they sweare, &c.* he vseth here the same word which the faithfull vse in their oathes: for when they call the liuing God to witnesse, it is as much as if they presented themselues before his iudgement seat, as being well assured, *that howsoeuer God may deferre his vengeance for a time, yet must they come to an account, in regard he alwayes liues*. Thus the faithfull acknowledge, that if they forsweare themselues, they can gaine nothing by it, though God should suspend his iudgement. But (as I

haue

haue already said) the Prophet referres this to the hypocrites, who seemed to honour God much: for nothing hath a goodlier shew than their words. But gall is in their hearts, whilest they haue these sugred words in their lips. The Prophet then *derides* this fained holinesse, when he saith; that in outward shew they sware very demurely, as though they affected nothing more than piety and religion; *yet for this they will sweare.* Others translate, truly, or certainly: but the sense will be plainer, if we translate, *for this*, that is to say, *for this thing*, or for this cause, *they will sweare falsly*, or lyingly. It followes.

Vers. 3. *O Lord, are not thine eyes vpon the truth? Thou hast smitten them, and they haue not sorrowed; thou hast consumed them, and they haue refused to receiue discipline*, or correction, *they haue hardened their faces more than a stone*, or rocke, *they would not conuert*, or turne.

SOme expound, or rather draw in (as it were) against the haire, an vnapt sense from the beginning of this verse, as if the Prophet should say, God therefore turnes not his eyes vpon the right, because he doth so seuerely reuenge himselfe vpon the sinnes and offences of his people. But *Ieremiah* prosecutes his former argument still. For the distinction of the verses is of no moment, in this behalfe. Whosoeuer hath thus distinguished them, hath often peruerted and corrupted the sentences: wee must winke at this fault then: onely for the helpe of memory we are to retaine the number. But as touching the scope of the text, the obseruation thereof often hinders the readers: for things separated one from another, are for the most part confused; yea, and that which was very well knit together, shall we find dis-ioyned. I often think hereupon, and it is also a profitable aduertisement: as in this place, after the Prophet hath shewed how the Iewes were disloyall, and of a double heart, void of all vprightnesse, he adds, *yet doe thine eyes O Lord, behold the right*,

right, or truth. As if he should say, it is in vaine for them to pretend the name of God, or to shelter themselues vnder heapes of ceremonies, or outward appearances of godlinesse, *for God soundeth the heart and reynes*; he stands not vpon vizards of holinesse, wherewith mens eyes are blinded and bleared. Furthermore, the Prophet thus *suddenly directs his speech to God*, the better thereby to shew how irksome his trauels were vnto him, when he saw his preaching did so little good, among so headstrong a people. For had the Iewes in any measure been tractable or teachable, no doubt he would rather now (vpon his reproofe) haue exhorted them to integrity and vprightnes. He might very well haue said thus, Those were much deceiued, who in swearing by the name of God, perswade themselues that he will therefore be their father: *for his eyes behold the truth*, and the vprightnesse of the heart. This had been (you see) to good purpose, and it had also been an apt manner of teaching: but *Ieremiah breakes off his speech*, as it were abruptly, *and leauing the people, turnes him to God: Lord* (saith hee) *are not thine eyes vpon the truth?* As if he should haue said, *What doe I any further trouble my selfe about this desperate people? I speake, but it is as if it were to a rocke; or to a stone wall. Fare you well therefore, I haue done with you: I will now another while make my mone to God.* Now we see that this * *apostrophe, hath much more vehemency in it, than if the Prophet had still spoken to the Iewes without intermission*; performing the office of a teacher vnto them. For thus he shewes, that his head and heart was broken with this tedious course, seeing his words so little to preuaile, and all of them generally to whom hee preached, to bee stubborne and obstinate. Neither yet did he cast foorth this speech rashly into the ayre, as if it had been to no purpose: but by this meanes he rather meant with the greater eagernesse, *to pricke forward* these dull scholers of his, whom hee saw thus to lagge behind; for otherwise hee was (as it were) hopelesse, that he should euer procure their good. Wee

Vers. 2.

* *A turning of ones speech from those that are present, to some absent.*

are

are to call to minde then, that which elsewhere I haue touched, namely, that the Prophets preached not word for word as they haue written: but after they haue stood long vpon a poynt before the people, they then gathered the summe afterwards. And thence came the bookes of the Prophets. *Ieremiah* therefore no question, had at large handled the doctrine of repentance; had earnestly inueyed against the hypocrites; had discouered the fraudulent courses of his nation; and had also sharply reproued their obstinacie. But after all this, it was needfull hee should *make a stop as it were, in the mid way*, in regard hee well foresaw that little fruit would redound to him by his painfull labours. And the Iewes also being priuie to this, it stood him in hand to touch them so much the more, to the quicke. For doe we not see how wee at this day prouoke the spirit of God by our rebellion, in regard it is so horrible a monster? Nothing therefore ought more to wound vs to the heart, than the same. What a thing is it? God calles vs familiarly to him euery day: but when hee sees our hearts so hard, and that we hold vp our heads so high; *there he leaues vs*, because we grieue his holy spirit, as he saith in Isa.63.10. *An ordinary or common course of teaching here then, would not serue the turne: but there was need of more efficacy now to be added to his teaching, when he saw the wickednesse of his nation was become intolerable. Lord* (saith he) *are not thine eyes vpon faith*, or truth.

See for this matter, Master Calvins preface before the prophesie of Isaiah, the latter end.

Now when he speakes *thus to God*, there is an antithesis betweene God and men. For we know that the worst sort of people in the world are pleased well enough, whileſt they may haue the good opinion and estimation of men like themselues. Whileſt they are so esteemed then, they lie snorting in their vices. The Prophet derides this foolish confidence, and shewes that God sees otherwise than mortall man doth. For man scarcely can looke the length of three fingers from him: but God diueth into the very bottome and depth of the heart. The Prophet then so speakes of *Gods eyes*, that in respect thereof he

he shewes mens iudgements are friuolous, in regard they seeke after nothing but faire shewes, and vaine appearances. By the word *faith*, as also in the first verse of this chapter, the Prophet meanes the integrity of the heart. They erre from the marke then, who to shew their wit, endeauour to prooue, from this place, that we are acceptable to God by faith onely. *For the Prophet speakes not heere of that faith by which wee embrace free reconciliation with God; by which also we are made the members of Iesus Christ.* The sense then is plaine enough of it selfe, namely, that God esteemes not outward shewes, wherewith men are delighted, as it is in 1. Sam. 16. 7. *Man lookes to the outward appearance; but God regards the heart.* By the word *heart* there, the holy Ghost expresseth the same thing which *Ieremiah* meanes *by faith, or truth heere.* For *Samuel* shewes, that *Dauids* father deceiued himselfe in bringing forth those sonnes first, which were of the most comely stature and personage. *Man* (saith hee) *lookes to the outward forme; but God sees the heart.* Now wee haue the true and naturall sense of the Prophets words; to wit, after the hypocrites shall haue flattered themselues to the full, and that all the world should haue applauded them therein; yet all this shall serue them to no purpose: for in conclusion, they must all be summoned before the barre of Gods iudgement seate. Now in his presence, *nothing but truth* hath place, neither is any thing else precious in his sight.

He adds, *Thou hast smitten them, but they haue not sorrowed.* Here the Prophet reprooues the obstinacy of the people, in that being smitten of God, yet they amended not. For experience (as they say) is the mistrisse of fooles. It is also a prouerbe, as true as ancient, that fooles become wise by their harmes and losses. The Heathen Poets, and Historiographers doe often vse these sentences. Since then the Iewes were of so stubborne and rebellious a nature, that they gained nothing, *no not by the smart of the stripes with which they were smitten*; it was a signe they

Prouerbes,

were

were altogether incurable. The Prophet heere then subscribes vnto the former sentence, where God said, hee would spare this people, if an honest and vpright man could be found in the whole City. This the Prophet confirmes when hee saith, *Thou hast smitten them, but they haue not sorrowed.* No doubt but the Iewes sorrowed; yea and howled also, vnder the blowes, and were but too skilfull in making their complaints. For wee see with what an heighth of pride they despited God himselfe. *They sorrowed then:* but the word *sorrow*, is heere taken *strictly:* as where *Paul* handles the doctrine of repentance, he shewes, that the beginning thereof consists in sorrow. So in this place the Prophet denies, that those who had confused thoughts in their minds, did therefore sorrow rightly: *for they felt not that they had to deale with God.* By this word then, hee signifies as much as another Prophet doth, who saith, *they looked not to the hand of him that smote them*, Isa. 9. 13. For his meaning is not, that they were so brutish or blockish, as not sensibly to feele the blowes: but in the meane while, they neglected the hand of God, from whence they came. Now this ought chiefly to be respected in our sorrow: for although wee howle with a blind outrage, proceeding from the sense of our miseries; hauing this word *Alas*, neuer so much in our mouthes, what of all this? These are onely the yellings and rorings of bruit beasts. But when wee haue regard to the *hand that smiteth*; that is the true and right framed sorrow. In this sense *Ieremiah* saith, the Iewes *sorrowed not, because they felt not that God had iustly chastised them with his hand.*

They sorrowed, but it was not a sorrow according to God. 2. Cor. 7. 11.

In the next words he amplifies this doctrine, *Thou hast consumed them* (saith he) *and they refused to receiue correction.* When he saith, *they were consumed*, it is a signe of a desperate rebellion. For if God touch vs but lightly, no maruell, if (according to our slowneſse and carelessnesse) we be not forthwith awakened. But if God redouble his blowes; yea, that hee not onely scourgeth vs

When God doubles his chastisements, and we bow not vnder them, it is a signe that the diuell hath besotted vs.

with his rods, but also drawes forth his fiery sword, vtterly to consume vs: when he deales thus with vs, and executes his vengeance by horrible and fearfull iudgements; if then (I say) *we be yet senseless*, vnder such euils, and feele not how hidious a thing it is to fall into his hands: it may well be concluded, *that the diuell hath blinded and bewitched vs.* This benummednesse that was in the Iewes, the Prophet now bewaileth, in regard they were not onely *void of feeling the stripes whilest God smote them*; but that *they receiued no correction, albeit he consumed them.* In this second member he toucheth that which I formerly told you; namely, that this sorrow whereof he spake, must not be taken generally, but for that true sorrow which sets Gods iudgement in such wise before vs, that we learne to tremble thereat.

He adds, *that they hardened their faces like a stone*: in a word, *that they would not returne.* The Prophet signifies, that the Iewes were not onely *rebellious*, but also growne *shamelesse.* And although they had shewed all the signes of shame that possibly they could; yet all had been nothing, vnlesse the integrity of the heart had gone before, as we haue said. But it often falles out, that euen the most wicked being full of impiety; of the contempt of God, and rebellion also: will yet be smitten with some shame and remorse. But the Prophet (to shew that the Iewes were growne to the heighth of all impiety) saith, *they hardened their faces*: that is to say, they were vtterly impudent, in regard they had reiected all honesty, and difference betweene good and bad, of iustice and equity. Being destitute then, of all *humane sense*; hee therefore saith, nothing now remaines, but that God (according as hee had foretold) must of force execute *his last iudgement vpon them.* And hee repeates that which hee said, when hee saith, *they refused to returne.* For hee signifies, that they sinned not now through error or ignorance, neither were they gone astray through weakenesse: but that voluntarily, and of set purpose, they cast off all care of their

saluation,

saluation, and wittingly had forsaken the Lord, so as they would suffer *neither his word nor workes* to take any place in them.

The Prayer.

Almighty God, and heauenly Father, for as much as Satan ceaseth not so to allure vs to himselfe by his enticements, that wee become like those that are senseleſſe of thy iudgements; grant vs the grace, good Lord, that thy word may shine into our minds and hearts, that wee sleepe not in darkenesse; and therewithall so awaken vs by thy holy spirit, that we may attentiuely hearken to all the admoniſements of thy holy Prophets, by which thou calleſt vs into the right way, that so wee periſh not: and grant that without ceasing wee may exerciſe our selues, the whole course of our liues, in the meditation of repentance, that wee may alwayes be diſpleased in our selues for our sinnes, that wee bee still iudging of our selues, that thy wrath may bee turned away from vs, till at the length, being come to the end of our warfare, which we are to wage continually against our sinnes, wee may attaine that bleſſed reſt, which is prepared for vs in the heauens, through Ieſus Chriſt our Lord. Amen.

THE NINTEENTH LECTVRE, WHICH IS THE SECOND VPON THE fifth Chapter.

Vers. 4. *And I said, certainly*, others translate, peraduenture; *they are those of the poorer sort; they haue done foolishly, because they know not the way of the Lord, the iudgment of their God.*

5 *I will goe to the great ones, and speake to them; for they know the way of the Lord, the iudgement of their God. but these also haue broken the yoke, and burst the bands.*

WHereas some thinke the Prophet heere excuseth his nation, and as much as in him is, lessens their fault; they are grosly deceiued. For doubtlesse by this comparison he makes it yet more euidently appeare, that things at that time were growne desperate. The summe is this; Corruptions raigned then, not onely amongst the common people, but euen among the great ones also; so as from the crowne of the head, to the sole of the foot, nothing was sound amongst them, as they say. There is a sentence somewhat like to this, in *Isaiah*, although in other words, Chap. 28. 7. 8. For hauing there first inueyed against the whole nation in generall, he taxeth the gouernours also: *You* (saith he) *are no lesse drunke than the common people.* I grant he affirmes it is through wine and strong drinke: but the meaning is, that they were all become like drunkards, in regard they were past shame; whilest (without any modesty at all) they gaue ouer themselues to the committing of all villanies and abominations. *Ieremiah* hath the same drift heere, when he saith, *I thought, surely they are of the poorer sort*, and those

those of small reckoning, that haue thus sinned; but I found euen the *Gouernours* also guilty as well as they. He might in a word haue said, Not onely those of the common and baser condition are corrupt; but the chiefe also, and those that should haue giuen good example to the rest. But this *comparison* hath farre greater waight, when he saith, *It may be those that haue thus failed are some of the poore ones, who are ignorant of the Law of God. And what marueil? But out of doubt we shall find greater integrity in the Gouernours.* When the Prophet speakes thus then, hee brings the readers to the view of the present fact as it were, and shewes that they were none of the rascality that had sinned; but they were the *Priests*, the *Prophets, and those of the chiefest ranke.* The Prophets meaning is plaine enough. *I said* (saith hee) *not that hee thought thus*: for he saw all things were out of square, and that there was no more good to be hoped for of the Gouernours, than of the gouerned. The Prophet knew all this full well: but (as I said before) he meant to shew, as in a liuely image, how miserable the condition *of the whole nation* was.

He saith, *certainly*: the word heere vsed in the Hebrew, serues either for an affirmation, or for a particle aduersatiue, *Although*, as wee saw in the third verse. Some take it in this place for *peraduenture*. It is put heere by way of yeelding so much, Put the case (saith he) that they are those of the baser and beggerlier sort that haue sinned thus: I wonder not that they haue carried themselues thus foolishly; *for they haue not knowne the way of the Lord, nor the iudgement of their God.* The Law indeed was manifested *to all indifferently*, so as the common sort were without excuse: but this sicknesse hath raigned almost in all ages, that few haue been attentiue to the law: for who is it that doth not willingly reiect this yoke? Now those of the meaner sort thinke to be somewhat excused, because they want leisure to study; neither are they borne to any great matters. The Prophet then frames

his stile according to the manner of men: and yet he lessens not the fault, if any would haue pretended ignorance. As, Oh sir, *I was neuer at the schooles.* For as we haue said, God published his Law for the good of the whole nation in generall.

By the way of the Lord, and by the iudgement of God, the Prophet signifies one and the same thing. It is a repetition then, a thing very vsuall with the Hebrewes. For when God prescribes vs *the rule of a good life,* it is as much as if he shewed vs *the way.* For our life resembles a race: now God would not haue vs to runne at randome; but sets vs vp a certaine marke. He also leades vs by a certaine way; because it is the office of the Law to call vs from wandring astray, and to leade vs to the marke that is set before vs. For this cause the Law is called *the way of the Lord:* but *iudgement,* as we heard yesterday, signifies vprightnesse, or a rule. He puts *the way of the Lord* in the first place; and *the iudgement of God* in the second. And thus he shewes, that such as esteeme themselues poore idiots that know nothing, are yet without excuse. For God meant no lesse to teach them, the right way, than the most learned in the world.

The office of the Law.

Such as liue vnder good teaching, cannot pretend ignorance, be they neuer so meane or simple.

Now he adds in vers. 5. *I will goe to the great ones.* By the *great,* hee vnderstands as well the *Priests* and *Prophets,* as the *Kings councell*; yea, the *King himselfe. I will goe then to the great ones, and speake to them:* which is as much as if he had said, *I know I shall but loose my labour, which way soeuer I goe: for they are all not onely deafe, if I direct my speech to the poore commons; but euen they among the gouernours also.* I told you erewhile, that the Prophet consults not in himselfe as of a thing doubtfull; but as one meaning to shame euen the greatest. Which he also doth, the better to confirme his former speech; namely, That there was not an vpright man to be found in all the City of Ierusalem.

Vers. 5.

For they haue knowne, &c. He repeats the same words affirmatiuely: yet wee must alwayes remember, that the

Prophet

Prophet was otherwise perswaded in his mind; but hee speakes as of a thing likely. For who would almost haue imagined, that at that time, there had been such brutishnesse in the heads and gouernours. For I tell you they were wonderfully admired amongst the people. This conceit then going for current, to wit, that all such as then had the command ouer the people, were men well exercised in the Law of God: *Ieremiah speakes now according to that received opinion, doubtlesse they haue knowne the way of the Lord.*

He adds, *But they haue broken the yoke, and burst the bands*; that is, if any supposeth the heads and gouernours are any whit better than the commons, hee failes exceedingly; for I know well enough how the world goes with them. *They also*, haue as well broken Gods yoke, as the most ignorant among the rude multitude. By this *reason*, he yet better confirmes the certainty of their reuolt, and withall shewes how vnworthy a thing it was that the Prophets, Priests, and Iudges, who had the command of all, were so dissolute and vnbridled in their lusts. It followes.

Vers. 6. *And therefore a Lion out of the forrest hath smitten them, the wolfe of the deserts*, others by the word heere vsed, vnderstand the nights, or euenings, because they deriue it from another word, which signifies the euening, and translate, the wolfe of the night, *hath destroyed them: the Leopard*, others translate, the Panther, *watcheth ouer their Cities; whosoeuer goes out thence shall be dismembred*, or rent in pieces, *for their iniquities are many, and their reuolts*, or transgressions, *are encreased.*

Ieremiah now at length shewes, that God keepes such a measure in his iudgements, that the cast-awayes shall in vaine accuse him of ouermuch seuerity, though it bee vsuall with them so to doe. Some translate these words as if that which is heere said, had been already effected;

and thinke the sense to be this, namely, that the Prophet reproacheth the Iewes; shewing it was not without cause they had been chastised with so many calamities, in regard they had iustly deserued as many more. But the other sense suites also very well. For we know how the Hebrewes are wont to change the tenses of verbes: and for mine owne part, I willingly referre it to the time to come, because it seemes the Prophet makes not a narration of that which they had formerly suffered; but how sharpe the afflictions were, which immediatly should befall them.

The Lion of the forrest shall smite them. As touching the words, we told you that *the Wolfe of the desert*, is as much as the wolfe comming out of the desert. Whereas others expound it the wolfe of the night or euening, it may also stand. For in other places we know that hunger-starued wolfes are called wolfes of the night; in regard they hauing sought their prey all the day long, and not meeting therewith, are almost mad in the euening: thus hunger makes them range here and there. This exposition then may passe: but hauing said before, that the Lion came out of the forrest, it is more likely he also describes the wolfe comming out of the desert. And as touching the summe, the difference is not great.

He names *three beasts* heere, *A Lion, a Wolfe, and a Leopard*. No doubt but by these beasts, *vnder a metaphor, he meanes the enemies which should shortly inuade the land with great cruelty*. True it is, that before *Ieremiah* made this Sermon, the Iewes had already suffered many calamities: for God reuenged not himselfe vpon them, all on one day; but he often aduertised them: and had there been any hope of amendment left, hee would yet haue saued them, because their condition had been to be pitied. But it seemes *Ieremiah* propheseth heere, of iudgements to come: and therefore hee not onely vnderstands by these beasts, *the Assyrians*, and the *Egyptians*; *but all other enemies also*. For we know that this nation was hated mor-

tally of all their neighbours, and cruelly vexed with iniuries, euen by those of their * *owne blood*. In regard then, so many nations hated the poore Iewes, it is no maruell if the Prophet numbers vp *three sorts* of beasts heere. As if he should say; Enemies will inuade you on euery side, who like *Lions, Wolues, and Leopards, will exercise their cruelty vpon you*, because you haue so often, so many waies, and so long a time together, prouoked the Lord to displeasure. In the meane while, God heere reiects the false and peruerse complaints which the wicked were ready euer & anon to make against him: shewing, that he is their iust iudge; and that the punishments and chastisements which he inflicted vpon the Iewes, were not to bee taken in ill part. And hitherto appertaines that particle, *therefore*, or, because.

* *Of the Edomites, Moabites, &c.*

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He adds, that *the Leopard watcheth to rend all those in pieces that come out of the Cities*. Doubtlesse hee signifies by this similitude, that after the enemie hath inuaded the land, *the Iewes shall be so inclosed and shut vp within their Cities, that they shall not dare to peepe out, because dangers from euery part, shall appeare vnto them*.

In the end of the verse hee repeats againe, and more largely prosecutes that which he vnderstood by the particle, *And therefore, or because*. For hee saith, *because their iniquities are multiplied, and their reuolts encreased*. By these words he shewes yet better, that which he touched before; to wit, that God is a iust iudge, euen then when he seemes to be most seuere: for it was impossible that this so desperate a people should escape without some strange iudgement inflicted vpon them from God. Neither names he them simply *wicked ones, or Apostataes*, but he saith, *their iniquities*, or wickednesses *were multiplied, and their reuolts augmented. And by this latter word, hee aggrauateth their condemnation*. For albeit the first word signifies not onely to faile, but to doe *wickedly*: yet to *reuolt from God*, is a crime much more odious and hatefull. Whence wee gather, that the Iewes are heere charged

with

with so great a peruersity, that it was not to bee chastised with ordinary or light remedies. It followes.

Vers. 7. *How shall I pardon thee for this?* that is, how should I pardon thee? for so it must be vnderstood. *Thy children haue forsaken me, and haue sworne by that which is not God. Now I haue filled them, and they haue committed adultery*; or, notwithstanding they haue, &c. *and the house of the harlot they are assembled*, or, in the house of the harlot.

* *A consultation or talking.*

THe manner of speech heere vsed, is by the Rhetoritians called * *communicatio*. For God meane, after a sort, thus his aduerse party, against whom hee pleads, should be [illegible] of the cause; & yet as of a matter already out of question. Now this is a signe that one is very confident of his cause: and therefore when the Rhetoritians meane to shew, that the cause is cleere and manifest which they propound: they consult with their aduerse party thus: What? Doe I not propound the matter plainly vnto thee, as it is? Canst thou any way gainsay it? Put the case thou mightest haue liberty and power to bee iudge thy selfe; would not reason it selfe constraine thee to speake after this manner? Euen thus God also shewes that he is forced (as it were) of necessity to punish and chastise the Iewes thus rigorously; testifying that he can doe no lesse. *If I* (saith he) *bee the Iudge of all the world, shall those that prouoke me thus to my face, goe vnpunished? should I not expose my glory to open contempt? should I not also dispoyle my selfe of my power? I should cease to be that I am, and should in a manner renounce my selfe; if I should not punish so desperate and rebellious a people.* Now wee haue the Prophets meaning. Others supply a letter heere, and take one for another: and thus they translate, *Not vpon this.* But nothing constraining vs to change ought; and that many also subscribe to this exposition; I had rather follow that which is most receiued. The Word which the

See to this purpose, vers. 9.

Prophet

Prophet vseth in the Hebrew, signifies *where*: but oftentimes it is taken for *how*? For it must not bee vnderstood heere as hauing respect to a place, but to the matter. *How* then (saith he) *should I pardon thee for this? Wee see how God consults with his aduerse party, making themselues (as it were) the iudges.* As if he should say, *Answere mee: say that I should giue you authority and leaue, to name and appoint the chastisements which you haue deserued; can I who am the Iudge of the world, pardon so hatefull impieties.*

For thy children haue forsaken mee: this is the first sinne. Now when God complaines *he was forsaken*, his meaning is, that the people had wittingly and willingly reiected the yoke: for the like could not haue been affirmed of the prophane nations. I grant if we haue respect to the beginning, soone after the creation, all may bee condemned of forsaking of God, and of reuolting from him; in regard he manifested himselfe to *Adam*, and to the soonnes of *Noah*: and when they fell afterwards into superstitions, they were therein guilty of Apostasie. But the reuolt of the Iewes was much more later, and therefore lesse tolerable: and especially, seeing they gloried much of the title of Gods people; what pretext or colour of ignorance could they alleage? We see now then, what the Prophet meanes, when hee saith, *God was forsaken* of this people.

Then he adds, *and haue sworne by that which is not God.* Vnder one part he notes, that Gods seruice was peruerted and corrupted: in regard *an oth* (as wee said yesterday) is a part, or one kind of Gods seruice. For as oft as we sweare by the name of God, we thereby *make protestation of our subiection* vnder his authority; and that *wee cannot escape vnpunished if we lie.* Secondly, wee attribute vnto him this honour, *that he is true.* Thirdly, we thereby also professe, *that nothing is done without his priuity*; but that all things are manifest before him. When hee saith heere then, that the Israelites *sware by that which was not God*, he meanes, they *spoyled God of his right.* No doubt but

See vers. 2.

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but they were culpable of *other sinnes*: but (as wee haue said) vnder *one head*, the Prophet comprehends all those superstitions, which at that time had full swinge amongst the people. It is as much then, as if he had said, *they worshipped idols, and the gods which their owne hands had forged.*

He adds *a circumstance* which aggrauates their crime: *Now I haue filled them* (saith he) *to be full, and they haue committed adultery.* There is a certaine kind of correspondency in the Prophets words, which hath great grace; but we cannot expresse it well in our language. Hee said before, *Saboa*, that is to say, *they sware*: now he saith, *Seba; I haue filled them.* There is no difference betweene the words, one poynt onely excepted: for if you place the pricke on the left hand, it signifies *to fill*; if on the right, it signifies *to sweare*: therefore the Prophet saith, *they sware*, notwithstanding *they were filled.* And heere God notes out the detestable ingratitude of the Iewes, in that being repleat with the abundance of all good things, euen till their skins cracked (as it were) yet they acknowledged not him who was so liberall and louing a father vnto them. *I haue filled them* (saith he) *and they haue committed adultery.* Now this place shewes, that such are least worthy to obtaine pardon, as sinne with an high hand, after God hath drawne them to himselfe, by his fatherly goodnesse and clemency. When men then, play the wild colts after this manner, despiting God, whilest he so graciously forbeares them: no doubt, but such treasure vp wrath against the day of wrath; as Saint *Paul* saith in the second to the Romans: and therefore wee ought to take diligent heed when God dandles vs in his lap (as you would say) that we flatter not our selues, nor suffer our prosperous estate to pricke vs forward to such intemperancy, as to cast the doores off the hookes, as they say. But when God vouchsafes so graciously to allure and draw vs to him: let vs learne willingly to subiect our selues vnto him: and whilest he shewes himselfe so amiable,

שבע.

שבע

God filled this people to the full, and they sweare.

Rom. 2. 5.

A profitable lesson.

able: let vs learn to carry our selues amiably towards him.

He saith, *they committed adultery*. This may bee taken metaphorically: but because in the next verse he inueyes vehemently against loosenesse, and adulteries, we may expound this according to the letter, as they say. And yet I thinke it to be a similitude, when he saith, *they committed whoredomes*: in regard there was *no spirituall chastity* in them; howsoeuer the Lord for his part laboured to keepe them within compasse.

He saith, *and in the house of the harlot, they assembled*. This may be taken as if the Iewes were tearmed the *harlots house*: as if he should say, *The whole City of Ierusalem, and the land of Iudeah is no better than a stewes*. Others notwithstanding expound it, that they assembled as into the harlots house: and thus he should allude to their Temple. Now it is *a signe of impudencie*, when many adulterers and whoremasters assemble together in an house. For you shal haue many that are ashamed to haue their whoredomes knowne: they are carefull therefore to couer their villanies, as much as they can. But when they *flocke in by heaps*, as it were with banners displayed, it is a signe all shamefastnesse is banished: and that such as ouerflow thus in intemperancy, may well bee resembled to brute beasts. This sense then sutes very well in this place; namely, that such as glory in their superstitions, and sacrilegious actions, *are assembled together into a brothell-house*. It followes.

Vers. 8. *They were of fed horses*, others translate, armed; they meane, well trapped, stout, and sturdy, *rising early*; others translate, drawing; and deriue it from another verbe, *euery one neighed after his neighbours wife*. The words indeed are in the future tense; yet hee signifies a continued act.

HEre, as I take it, *Ieremiah* passeth from the *first table* of the Law, *to be second*, and toucheth *one kind* only,

onely. But his meaning in a word is, that there was *neither faith nor honesty* in this people: he cõpares hẽ then to wanton, & *pampered horses*: & thus he discouers their filthines (as it were) vpon the stage. For had he said euery one had watched his opportunity to defile the bed of his brother; this had been odious enough in it selfe: but when hee tearmes their inordinate lust, a *neying*; when hee calles them that did so, *horses*; yea, *fed horses, rising in the morning*, after they are filled: doubtlesse hee thereby notes, that their intemperancy and dissolution was growne so great, that they ought not onely to be esteemed whoremongers, or adulterers; but that there was in them a much greater and detestable villany, *in regard they differed in nothing from pampered horses, neying after mares.*

They are fed horses, saith he: those which translate, *armed*, deriue the word from a verbe which signifies, *to arme*: but others had rather deriue it from a verbe which signifies, *to eate*. How euer, questionlesse he meanes here, fat, and fed horses. For otherwise, why should he say, they were well pampered? Whereas some others also affirme, that they *rose early*, after they had defiled themselues, to discouer their filthinesse, and gloried in their vices; this is much more vnapt. For he notes out strong horses, that are nimble about their businesse; and therefore they rise the morning after they haue well farsed themselues. Now wee see the Prophets meaning. The summe is, that *no chastity remained in the Iewes, in regard they gaue ouer themselues to inordinate lusts*, not onely *as adulterers are wont to doe: but therein they rather resembled horses, well pampered.* And yet (as we haue said) vnder this *incontinency*, he notes and comprehends *thefts*, and other deceits, *violent robberies*, with the like. For it is certaine, that he taxeth the transgression of the Iewes, in those things which respect the breach of the second Table of the Law. It followes.

Vers. 9. *Shall I not visit*, or should I not visit, *vpon these things, saith the Lord? And shall not my soule be auenged vpon such a people as this?* or, which is like to this.

AGaine, God talkes with them, *as by way of consultation*: which hee doth to prevent their complaints, and to stop their mouthes, least they should alleage that he censured them ouer sharply. To take away all their replies then, God once againe repeats, that hee cannot passe by such enormous and crying sinnes as these. Now hee layes downe this as a principle, *that it is impossible for him to spare such a people as repents not*. For if God be the Iudge of the world; *he cannot renounce his iudgement, than his owne essence*. In as much then, as these things are inseparable; to wit, God Maiesty, and his office of being Iudge ouer the whole world; the Prophet heere concludes, it was impossible for the conceit of the Iewes to stand; namely, *that they should escape vnpunished*, albeit they wilfully and obstinately persisted in prouoking him by their horrible impieties, as if they meant to make open war vpon him. *Should I not visit vpon this, saith the Lord?* He vseth the name of God heere. Why? An earthly Iudge may well pardon and shew mercy to the most wicked offender in the world: but this can no way stand with Gods Iustice. For *as oft as hee pardons, hee therewithall brings sinners to repentance*; thus he neuer suffers sinnes to goe vnpunished. Truly, hee which repents and amends his life, becomes his owne Iudge. And thus hee preuents the iudgement of God. Where true conuersion is then, there God beares with sinners: but when men are growne so obstinate in committing euill, that being admonished, they despise all admonitions; there it is certaine God cannot pardon: if he should, he should therein also *renounce his owne glory, which (you know) is vnpossible. Sould I not visit* then? *saith the Lord.*

And should not my soule bee auenged, &c. Heere God speakes after the manner of men: for hee is not carried away with desire of reuenge. And when hee speakes of his *soule*, this also is *improper*: but the sense is not obscure. For the meaning is, that *God hates all impiety with a deadly*

See vers. 7.

He which truly repents, becomes his owne iudge, and so preuents Gods iudging of him.

by

ly hatred. As in Psal. 5. 5. *Thou hatest all them that worke iniquity.* Seeing it is so, it hence followes, that either hee must be pulled from his celestiall throne; or that the wicked must be punished: who like wild colts, take the bridle in their teeth, and cease not to adde sinne vnto sinne. As oft therfore as vaine flatteries shall come in our heads, and that Satan by his allurements, endeauours to make vs forget Gods iudgement; let it be remembred, *that God should not be God, vnlesse he punish the iniquities of the sons of men.* It necessarily followes then, either that hee must punish, or be our enemy. Moreouer (as hath been said) he should not otherwise be constant; nay, hee should (as it were) *change his nature*; *whose nature (as we know) is vnchangeable.* Where his hand therefore is already lifted vp to punish vs, there it is needfull that we preuent the iudgment. But what shall be the meanes? We must learne to pronounce sentence against our selues, and to be displeased with our sinnes: when there is such a conuersion, then God will shew vs mercy. And thus hee will pardon our sinnes; *not as if he approoued of them*, or as if he still exercised not the office of a Iudge: but (as I haue already said) the doctrine of this verse is properly directed against those that are vtterly rebellious; or to such as the diuell hath so bewitched and dulled, as they passe not what become of them. In a word, this doctrine either makes the wicked cleane without excuse, if they persist in their obstinacy: or rather, it ought to awaken such as are not yet past cure; that in iudging themselues now, they put it not off, till God reueales his wrath from heauen, and to execute his last sentence against them.

God should not be God, if he should not punish transgressors.

The Prayer.

Almighty God and heauenly Father, for as much as wee are enclined to the same vices, which wee read the ancient people of the Iewes were once too much addicted vnto; grant that we being gouerned by thine holy Spirit, may not harden

our

our hearts against thine holy admonitions, whereby thou dai-
ly rebukest both vs and our sinnes: but grant we may become
truly teachable, and obedient. And because hitherto we haue
been but too rebellious, and haue proclaimed open warre a-
gainst thy iustice; let vs another while learne to fight against
our selues, and our vices: that taking our direction from thy
holy word, and hauing gotten the conquest ouer our selues, we
may at length also obtaine the crowne which is prepared for
vs in heauen, by Iesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE TWENTIETH LECTVRE, WHICH IS THE THIRD VPON THE fifth Chapter.

Vers. 10. *Climbe vp vpon her walles, and destroy them,* or scatter them, *and yet make not the consumption,* or rather, an end, *take away her spreading,* or branches, or the teeth of the wall, as others translate: or the battlements; *for they are not the Lords.*

HEre God, by the mouth of his Prophet, *speakes to the enemies,* whose seruice hee meant to vse, for the execution of his vengeance vpon the Iewes. Now this is vsuall with the Prophets, when they meane to gaule men to the quicke: for wee are not ignorant that there rests in men a world of carelesnesse, when God summons them before his iudgement seat. *Ieremiah* then seeing he profited little, by a plaine manner of teaching, takes this course as ye see. In the *person of God,* he speakes to the *Chaldeans, and commands them to speed themselues to the siege of Ierusalem.* Thus the Prophets are wont to speake: God will hisse for the flie that is in Egypt: or he will sound a trumpet, and call the Caldeans, Isa. 7. 18.

and 5. 26. But this kind of figure hath much more efficacie to wound mens hearts, when the Prophet, by Gods expresse charge, as an herald sent from heauen, *calles the enemie, and appoynts them out their taske; namely, to destroy the whole City.* In the first place hee saith, *Climbe vp vpon the walles*, whereby he signifies, that it is but in vaine for the Iewes, *to trust in the heights of their walles*; because God will so aduance and lift vp their enemies, that *the entrance* shall not be difficult vnto thē. The Iewes thought themselues safe, in regard the City was well defenced. But they shall be deceiued, saith he: thus then hee reprooues their folly, because their walles should bee insufficient to saue them.

He further adds, *make not an end.* This clause is expounded two waies: for some take it in the good part, as if God should mitigate the sharpnesse of this so great a punishment, as in the former chapter wee haue seene that some take it so. For albeit there, God affrights his people; yet (as they thinke) by way of correction hee adds, *yet will I not make a consumption*: that is to say, there shall a remnant escape. The Prophets also are wont to speake thus, when they meane to shew that some seed shall alwayes remaine, to the end the Church be not wholly extinguished. Thus now the expositors interpret it: as if God should say, Ierusalems ruine shall not bee so great, but the Church shall still remain safe, in regard all should not be consumed. Others take the word heere vsed, for end: and this sense agrees much better. For in this verse God threatens to cut of the Iewes. Neither doth this contradict that which is said elsewhere; to wit, that there should not be an vtter waste or consumption; in regard it is well enough knowne that the Prophets keepe not all one tenour in their speeches. For when they denounce Gods iudgements against the reprobates, they leaue them without any hope at all. Which manner of speech is often met withall: *I will make a consumption.* But in directing their speech to the faithfull, they moderate this rigor

Chap. 4. 27.

Isa. 10. 22.

by

by way of correction; to wit, God will not make an vtter consumption: I willingly therefore receiue their exposition, who take the word *consumption* in this place, for end; for the verbe whence this word is deriued, signifies to finish. The sense then will be; *Destroy the City, and let there be none end*; that is, raze it wholly. For forthwith it followes in the same sense, *take away her spreadings*, or her branches: or as other translate, The teeth of her walles; which are in the foundation. For wee know that walles are so built, that the foundation is alwayes the largest: and the word which the Prophet vseth, signifies spreadings, which are extended euery way abroad. Those who turne it iaggs, notches, wings, or battlements of the wals, seeme not to haue attained the Prophets meaning: in regard he speakes not heere of the toppe of the walles, but of the foundations: as if hee should say, ouerthrow her foundations, or raze the walles of the City. Why so? He adds,

They are not the Lords: for the Iewes were puffed vp with a vaine confidence, thinking they should be hid vnder Gods protection: as if God (forsooth) would keepe their City, because the Sanctuarie and the altar were seated within the same. The Prophet therefore flatly denies, *that the walles were the Lords*, or that the foundations thereof were his. Neither may that which is said elsewhere be alleaged to the contrary; namely, that God laid the foundations of this City. God indeed had chosen it for his dwelling place; howbeit on this condition, that his people should there serue him in sincerity. Ierusalem being afterwards become a den of theeues, God left her, as it is in *Ezechiel*. The prophet then refels this sottish confidence, wherewith the Iewes deceiued themselues: for they thought that God (after a sort) was so bound and tied vnto them, as hee could neuer cease to bee the guardian of the City. Hee saith then, that *their foundations were none of Gods*: for the Iewes had so profaned this place by their wickednesses, that God could not

Psal. 87.1.

Ezech. 14.16.

endure to dwell in such a dunghill. It followes.

Vers. 11. *For the house of Israel, and the house of Iudah, haue dealt wickedly against me, saith the Lord.*

THe word which the Prophet vseth, signifies to deale disloyally. God heere then condemnes the Iewes of disloyalty, because they had reuolted from him. For hee not onely complaines that they failed in some one kind, and had thus offended him; but hee condemnes them in regard of a generall reuolt. He affirmes, that *both the houses of Israel, and Iudah*, were become Apostataes. Wee know the people were then diuided into two kingdoms. Now albeit *Ieremiah* was properly ordained a Teacher of the Tribe of Iudah; yet was he therewithall to bestow his labours on the Israelites also. The kingdome of Israel was in part subdued; for foure tribes were already led captiue: this kingdome then, was (as it were) rent in peeces, and growne feeble: notwithstanding, as much as in him lay, he sought the good of that remnant which was left. You see why he saith, *that both the one and the other*, are wicked Apostataes, in regard they had carried themselues disloyally against God. Now because this was a most bitter complaint, and therefore would gaule them to the quicke, *he referres it to God*; knowing well enough that the Iewes would neuer take this reproch well at his hands. *It is the Lord that speakes*, saith hee: as if hee should say, plead not with mee, as if I handled you ouer-seuerely: but if you will pleade; argue the case *with God*: for *it is he* that affirmes, that as well the Israelites, as the Iewes, are become perfidious and disloyall. It followes.

Vers. 12. *They haue denied the Lord*, others translate, they haue lied to the Lord, *and said, It is not hee, neither shall euill befal vs,* neither shal we see the sword nor famine.*

* *For the application of this latter member, see the second section following in vers. 13.*

HE expresseth that which hee said before more cleerly, and also in more words. This was a kind of disloyalty,

loyalty, in that they had *denied the Lord*. For I doe not vtterly reiect the other translation; to wit, that they lyed to God. But because there is one letter in the word heere vsed, I will not say whether it signifies, *to lie*, in this place, or no: I make no question but hee simply affirmes, *that they had denied God*; and the context it selfe requires it should bee so. For by and by after, they expound themselues, when they said, *that God was not*. Certaine it is, that this was not simply to lye to God; but so to reiect him, *as if he had not been at all*. In regard this sense then, *that they lyed to God*, would bee too fauourable: I rather encline to the other side, namely, that *they denied God*; that is, they regarded him not; or they laboured to abolish the memory of him: and yet the reason is added, which also ought to be well obserued, *They said, God is not*. The more fully to expresse this, he saith, that they gloried, as if they should haue escaped punishment. Indeed it seemes an excessiue speech, when the Prophet affirmes, *they renounced God*. But to preuent all cauils, hee confirmes his speech, namely, *they said, God was not*. In the meane while, let vs see wherefore he chargeth them with so hatefull a crime. They made their vaunts, they should be freed from those plagues, wherewith the Prophets threatened them. Now wee see what it is with which the Prophet taxeth them: euen an obstinate contempt. For they had hardened their hearts against all the menaces of the Prophets. Which *Ieremiah* tearmes no lesse, *than a plaine deniall of God himselfe*. If we our selues might be iudges, we would thinke this definitiue sentence too sharpe and seuere: but we must hold it our wisedome to rest in the iudgement of the holy Ghost. This is an excellent place then, and well worthy our obseruation: for hence wee may gather, how much the Lord abhorres the carelesnes of such as harden their hearts against his threatnings, and set light by his iudgements. For if wee know him *to bee God*, we must not plucke from him the power *to iudge*. For what imports this Name *God?* Such as imagine hee sits

see vers. 3.

If we take from God his power to execute iudgment vpon offenders, we denie him to be God.

idle in heauen, and cares not how things go in the world, but followes his delights: albeit they *denie not God* in word; yet doe they nothing but toy with him. But in the meane while there is not so much as one dram of religion in such, nor any feeling of the diuine power. This place then, is diligently to be obserued, wherein God testifies that *we renounce him, if we be not touched nor moued with his threatnings*. Why so? Because our carelesnesse, in which we rocke our selues asleepe whileſt God thunders against vs; is nothing else but an vtter renouncing of him. Neither ought they heere, who despise Gods iudgments, to lessen this their fault. For this ỹ holy Ghost hath pronounced as a resolued truth; namely, all they that *scorne the Prophets*, doe as much in effect as conclude in their hearts, *there is no God*. For they bereaue him of his power and office, & only leaue to him a bare naked essence, that is to say, I know not what dreame, or fancy. Wee now then haue attained the Prophets meaning. For *with many words* he amplifies the disloyalty of the Iewes, which before hee condemned in them, because they had denied God, *and had said, it is not he*; that is, *because they had concluded in themselues*, surely, *the euils which the Prophets threaten, are not so neere vs, as they would make vs beleeue they are*. It followes.

See verſ. 13.

See verſ. 11.

Verſ. 13. *The Prophets shall goe away with the wind, and the word is not in them: thus shall it be done vnto them.*

THe Prophet prosecutes the same doctrine: wherfore this place is diligently to be noted, in regard the externall ministery of the word, is therin singularly recommended vnto vs. For what thing more detestable can be imagined, than the *denial of God*. But if the word retaine not its authority; it is all one as if the contemners should plucke God out of heauen, and denie him to be God. We see then, *how the maiesty of God is with an inseparable band, ioyned with the outward preaching of the word*. And this verse tends to the very same end: wherein *Ieremiah* dis-

The word is not in them.

couers

couers the scornes and deridings of the Iewes. For hee brings them in speaking these words, *The Prophets shal be as the wind, the word is not in them*: that is, *the euils wherwith they threaten vs, shall fall vpon their owne heads.* It may be the Iewes vttered not such blasphemies in plaine tearmes: but there was among them such a grosse and shamefull cõtempt of the Prophets, that this impiety was manifested well enough to all ỹ world, by their practice: it is not without cause then, that he condemnes so odious an impiety whẽ they said, *the Prophets should go away with the wind.* As the most part of men at this day, who when God thunders from heauen, and by his seruants manifests sure signes of his displeasure; they are not a whit moued therewith, but stand scorning of vs, and boldly repulse all feare farre, enough off from them. Oh! These are but words. These Preachers thunder terribly, when they are in their pulpits, but all shall vanish in the aire; and that which they denounce against vs, shall light vpon their owne heads. Many such scorners and profane persons we may heare of, almost in euery corner, who sticke not to disgorge such blasphemies. Although (as I haue said) the Iewes peraduenture durst not spit thus openly (as it were) in Gods face. But the holy Ghost, who exerciseth his iurisdiction vpon mens hearts, spirits, secret intentions, and affections; no doubt iustly condemnes the Iewes, of this so shamefull and execrable an impiety. Albeit out of other places it is not hard to collect, how they were growne to such a pride, that they made no bones, in plaine tearmes, to scorne all the threats which the Prophets denounced. How euer it be, the Prophet, as in a glasse, sets before vs, to what a height the obstinate rebellion of the Iewes against God, was now come vnto: for he heere makes it plaine, into what a wretched condition the Iewes were fallen, when they durst set vpon the Prophets with such a desperate boldnesse, as to charge them with *words of vanitie*, and lies. *The Prophets* (say they) *shall vanish with the wind*: and then, *the word is not*

Against such as thinke the preachers words are but wind.

in them. Thus the Iewes denied that any credit was to be giuen to the Prophets, albeit they pretended the name of God: for in their seeming, they did but foolishly brag, that this and that was commanded them of God. We see heere then, that all reuerence of sound doctrine was troden vnder foot: whereof we haue but too much experience at this day. For what reuerence doe men for the most part shew towards the word of God? This place then, ought diligently to be obserued, because we see heere, as in a mirrour, into what a malepertnesse and furie men plunge themselues, after they haue once begun *to call the truth of God into question.*

Verse. 12. *Thus shall it be done vnto them*; or, thus be it to them: for some thinke it to be an imprecation; as if the godlesse should say, Let the Prophets, to their owne ruine, feele what force the *sword, famine,* and *pestilence* hath; seeing they cease not day by day to dull our eares with such terrours: let them then know, what these scourges meane. But we may retaine the tense of the verbe heere vsed, *so shall it be done vnto them:* as if they opposed against the seruants of God; and as if themselues seemed to be his Prophets, forsooth: Well; we haue a prophesie cleane contrary to his: hee feares and terrifies vs, in threatening *the sword, famine,* and the *pestilence:* hee shall haue as good as he brings; we will another while, threaten that the *sword, famine, &c.* are now to fall vpon them. For by whose authority doe they thus insult ouer vs? Is it not lawfull for vs *to retort the same* backe againe vpon them? Now then we see the drift of this latter member. It followes.

Vers. 14. *Wherefore thus saith the Lord of hosts, seeing you haue pronounced this word; behold I will giue,* or, will put, *my words in thy mouth as a fire,* or, for a fire, *and this people shall be the wood, and it shall deuoure them.*

GOd heere shewes how insupportable this pride of theirs is vnto him, when they contemned his Prophets,

phets, by whose ministery he onely will be heard. For albeit Iesus Christ had not at all pronounced this sentence, *He that heares you, heares me, and he that despiseth you, despiseth me,* Luk. 10. 16. yet had this been a perpetuall law, in regard God from the beginning, meant that his seruants should be *no lesse obeyed, than if he himselfe had in his owne person descended downe from heauen.* And therefore the Iewes offered as much violence to God, as oft as they contemned his Prophets, as if they had presumed to haue spit in his owne face. God now shewes then in what detestation hee hath this their folly and madnesse, in that they profited nothing by the labours of his messengers.

Wherefore thus saith the Lord of hosts. Ieremiah vseth *this preface* the better to awaken the Iewes. For if in omitting these words, *Thus saith the Lord:* he had begun thus, *Because you haue pronounced this word, behold, God will make his words in my mouth as fier:* his doctrine would haue been receiued, but by way of contempt. But now putting *the name of God* in the first place, neither yet that simply; but adornes him with this title, and calles him, *the Lord of hosts*, therein magnifying *his power*, to terrifie them the more: doubtlesse this must needs touch the Iewes to the quicke. he saith then, *thus saith the Lord of hosts*; namely, *because you haue pronounced this word.* Hee *often changeth the persons heere*, but it is that the doctrine which he brings, might haue the more efficacy. He might as well haue said in the third person, Because they haue spoken thus, behold, I will put my words in thy mouth. But he speakes one while *to the people*, and then againe directs his speech *to his seruant Ieremiah.* Hee saith then, you cannot deny but you haue spoken thus: that is, you haue thus scorned me with your disdainfull speeches, as if my Prophets whom I sent, had buzed but an empty sound of words in your eares, or had fed you with fables. *Behold* (saith he) *I will put my words in thy mouth as fier,* (heere hee speakes to the Prophet) *and this people shall bee* See verf. 13.

the

Why Gods word is compared here to fier.

the wood; and the fire shall deuoure them. God compares his word *to fire:* not as in other places, nor for the same end: but there is a speciall cause of this similitude heere, to wit, that the words of the Prophets should consume the people, as the fier consumes dry wood, or stubble. The word of God is elsewhere tearmed burning, or flaming, in regard it inflames the hearts of men; and because it purgeth out, and consumes away their drossinesse. But the question heere, is neither of the vtility which the word brings with it, nor of the fruit which the faithfull reape from it. For God simply denounceth, *that the Prophets doctrine shall be the ruine of the people:* and therefore he expresly saith, *I will put my words in thy mouth, as a fier.* Had he onely said, Behold, my words shall bee as the fier, and this people as the stubble; this had not been cleere enough. But in regard the Iewes had now accustomed themselues to disdainfull scoffings: And (I pray you) what are these Prophets? and what are their big and high words? words that onely beate the aire. Because the Iewes (I say) accustomed themselues to these contemptuous speeches: therefore the Lord on the contrary answeres, *Behold, I will put my words in thy mouth:* that is to say, Thy tongue shall bee more than sufficient to abolish and root out this people. *Ieremiah* then teacheth the same here, which *Paul* doth in other words, 2. Cor. 10. 4. 5 We haue vengeance ready against euery high thing that exalts it selfe against the Gospel of God. For this vice hath raigned in all ages: namely, men haue either little respected, or rather vtterly contemned Gods seruants. Now Saint *Paul* seeing the Gospell despised of many, saith, that he, and his fellow-ministers *had vengeance ready:* as if he should haue said, all the words we vtter, shall bee as so many swords to ouerthrow and destroy the wicked; though now through their malepertnesse they dare repulse Gods iudgement: such a rebellion shall stand them in no stead. They then, shall feele no lesse efficacie in my words, then if God from heauen had openly discouered his

his arme vnto them, and had thence thundred downe vpon their heads. And this is *Ieremiahs* meaning in this place: *Behold saith the Lord, I will put my words in thy mouth as a fier*: that is, there shall bee such force in thy words, that the wicked shall well perceiue to their cost, that thou art the executioner of my vengeance.

We ought aduisedly to bethinke vs of the doctrine of this place, lest by our ingratitude wee prouoke Gods wrath so to be kindled against vs, that we cause his word to be conuerted *into fier*, which otherwise is ordained *for our food*. For to what purpose doth God send vs the ministers of his Gospell, but to allure vs to life eternall, and heereby sweetly to feed and refresh our soules? The word of God therefore is vnto vs as the *water*, wherewith our soules are *besprinkled and washed*. It is indeed as *a fier* vnto vs; but for our good. It is a *fier*, but it is to *purge out our drosse*; not to consume vs. If wee then shall dare proudly to contemne this fier, what will follow, but that it be turned to the cleane contrary vse; namely, to *deuoure* and vtterly consume vs?

The word of God by our vnthankefulnesse, may become a fier to consume vs, which in it selfe is food to feede vs.

Now he saith, *the people shall be as wood*, in regard the wicked, all the while they obstinately bend their iron brow against God, thinke thereby to make his vengeance to recoyle a farre off from them. But our Prophet derides this folly, and saith, *they shall be consumed as wood, or stubble*. It followes.

Vers. 15. *Behold, I will bring vpon you, O house of Israel, a nation of a farre country, saith the Lord: an hard nation*, that is to say, which shall be hardy, *an* * *ancient people, a people whose language thou vnderstandest not*, or shalt not know, *neither shalt thou vnderstand what they shall say.*

* or, of an age.

See Deut. 28. 49.

THe Prophet heere shewes how the people shall bee like *to stubble, or seare-wood*, namely, because God shall send such a calamity, as they little feared: and the context is heere to be noted. The Prophet told them in the

the former verse, that his tongue should be *as the fier*: now he applies this *to the Assyrians, and Caldeans*. It should seeme there is some repugnancy in these speeches. But we haue formerly aduertised you, that all Gods rods depend vpon the efficacie of the word. When the City then, was destroyed by the Assyrians, and Caldeans, *then the fier*, according to the word which *Ieremiah* had foretold, *destroyed both the City and people*. In a word, *Ieremiah* signifies, that when the enemie shall approch, respect must be had neither to their men, nor munition, nor yet to all the warlike powers they shall bring with them; but that it shall be the execution of the doctrine which proceeded out of the Prophets mouth. In another place we shall see how God sends *Ieremiah* to lay siege to the City: but with what power? None but himselfe alone, without any munition at all. True: but this was a mystery to the reprobate: and yet had it, its effect. *For as the Prophet spake, so did God execute that which proceeded out of his mouth*. We see heere then, that the Caldeans *came as it were out of Ieremiahs mouth*, euen as if the enemy minding to batter the walles of a City, should shoot against it, and play vpon the walles with Canon shot: for which purpose we at this day haue new engins, and inuentions for stratagems of warre, to batter and raze Cities: what are then all *the engins of warre*? They are the *fier*, which God casts out by the mouthes of his seruants, and the doctrine by them taught, brings forthwith with it, all the preparations of warre that can be inuented; not onely to destroy a City and people, but the whole world also, as oft as neede shall require.

Gods word, and the efficacie thereof, goeth alwaies together. See Isa. 55. 10 11. 2. Cor. 2. 14. 15. 16.

The word of God hath greater force in it, than is in all the engines of war.

I then, *will bring vpon you, O house of Israel, a nation from farre*. We haue told you elsewhere, why the Prophet notes out *this distance of place*; namely, because the Iewes imagined they were safe enough, in regard of these nations, so farre remote from them: as at this day, if one should tell vs of the inuasion of the Turkes: wee would reply, Oh, they haue enough to doe with many of other countries:

countreys: let them that dwell neare them, feare their incurſions; we hope it will be three or foure ages ere they come at vs. We ſee (I ſay) amongſt vs ſuch a careleſneſſe, to raigne in many. The Prophet then, that he might keep the Iewes from feeding their humours with this vaine confidence, ſaith, *that this people ſhall bee in a readineſſe at an inſtant, though they come from farre.*

He ſaith, *It is an hard,* or ſtrong *people, and a people which is wholly of an age:* by this word *age,* he meanes not onely ſtrong, *but hard,* or cruell. For hee will ſay by and by, they are all ſtrong. He calles this nation hard then, in regard they were cruell: afterwards he will alſo expreſſe *their barbarity.* But firſt of all he ſaith, *it is of a whole age:* becauſe when a nation hath ruled *time out of mind,* it eaſily begets cruelty and pride in them. This length of time often puffes vp mens hearts with pride and preſumption, and makes them the more cruell.

The word Sicle, *is commonly vnderſtood of an* 100. *yeeres.*

Now he ſpeaks of their barbarity, *Thou* (ſaith he) *ſhalt not vnderſtand their ſpeech, &c.* Wee know that in the *tongue,* there is not onely a *communication of words,* but alſo of *affections.* The tongue is the liuely image of the mind, as they vſually ſay; and therefore it is a band that knits men together in humane ſociety. For were there no vſe of the tongue, wherein ſhould men almoſt differ from beaſts? one would offer cruelty to another: In a word, there would be no humanity amongſt them. In as much then, as ſpeech vnites men together; therefore the Prophet *to terrifie the Iewes,* ſaith, that this ſhall be a barbarous nation, in regard *there ſhall bee no community neither of ſpeech nor of affections,* betweene them. Whence it alſo followes, that they ſhould ſhew *no pity,* in ſparing the vanquiſhed, *though they ſhould vſe neuer ſo many entreaties: yea the poorer ſort, who peraduenture might find ſome fauour if their ſpeech could be vnderſtood; euen thoſe ſhould obtaine no audience.*

The tongue the image of the mind, and a band that knits men together in humane ſociety.

The Prayer.

Almighty God and heauenly father, ſeeing thou maiſt iuſtly

iustly condemne in vs at this day, that grosse and cursed impiety which in times past thou condemnedst by the mouth of thine holy Prophet, in the ancient people the Iewes: grant wee pray thee, that we may not persist in our rebellion, but may learne in all meekenesse of spirit, so to subiect our selues to thy word, that it be not a fier to consume vs; but by good experience let vs find it ordained of thee vnto vs for our good and salvation, that being inflamed thereby with a burning desire after piety; and also being purged from all our wicked lusts and fleshly desires, we may fully giue ouer our selues to thy seruice, till being rid of this flesh, and the filthinesse thereof, wee may at length come to that solid and perfect purity, which is set before vs in thy holy Gospell, and so may partake with thee in thine eternall glory, through Iesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE ONE AND TWENTIETH LECTVRE, WHICH IS THE FOVRTH vpon the fifth Chapter.

Vers. 16. *His quiuer is an open sepulcher, all* shall bee *strong.*

THe Prophet began in the former verse, to threaten the Iewes with Gods iudgments, and told them that the Chaldeans should be the executioners thereof. He still prosecutes the same argument, and saith, *their quiuer shall be like open sepulchers.* We know the Easterne people, for the most part, vsed arrowes and darts: for they fought not standing still, but seemed to flee; and then suddenly turning backe, they discharged their arrowes, or darts against their enemies. The Prophet then alludes to this custome of theirs, when he saith, *their quiuer shall be*

be as open sepulchers. This similitude might seeme harsh and strange at the first: but it is all one as if hee had said, *they shall be so expert in the art of shooting*, that they shall make hauocke of all they meet withall.

And he adds, *All shall bee strong*; to let them know, that this should be no light skirmish: in a word, it is as if hee had said, this warre will bring such ruine vpon the Iewes, that they shall *all perish.*

Vers. 17. *And shall deuoure thine harueſt, and thy bread: they shall deuoure thy ſonnes, and thy daughters; they shall deuoure thy ſlockes, and thy cattell; they shall deuoure thy vine, and thy fig tree; they shall bring thy defenced Cities, in which thou didſt truſt, to pouerty, by the ſword.*

HE toucheth the cruelty of the enemie heere, in the same sense with the former: as if he should say, they haue the conqueſt already. Why so? Becauſe they are *Gods executioners.* He omits to speake to the Iewes then, of the difficulties and tediouſneſſe of warre: but speakes heere, as to thoſe that are vanquiſhed: onely he ſhewes, that the Caldeans in this conqueſt, ſhall be *very cruell.* He takes it as granted then, that the Caldeans ſhall haue the day; becauſe they ſhall vndertake this warre *by Gods appointment.* But he adds a ſecond point, namely, *that they ſhall carry themſelues cruelly heerein: and hauing vanquiſhed the Iewes, they ſhall inſult ouer them with an extraordinary pride.* Therefore he ſaith, *they ſhall eate*; and ſhall eat: for hee changeth the number in the verbe, and yet the ſenſe is all one. *He ſhall eate* (ſaith he) *thy harueſt, and thy bread*: that is to ſay, whatſoeuer thou reapeſt, ſhall bee a prey for the enemie. By *the harueſt, and bread*, he meanes all their commings in.

Next he adds, *they ſhall eate*, or deuoure *thy ſonnes and thy daughters.* This cruelty yet farre exceeds the other. I grant it is *an hard caſe to bee depriued of ſuſtenance; but when they come to cutting of throats, and that of poore infants,*

Reade the 18. verſe with this, for the further explanation thereof, and ſo forwards.

1

2

Harueſt.
Bread.

Sonnes.

Daughters.

fants, in the sight of their fathers and mothers, this is terrible indeed. And yet the Prophet saith, the enemie shall be so sauagely minded, that they shall not spare, no *not little babes.*

Flockes of cattel. He adds the same *of the flockes, and cattell:* and then he comes *to the vine, and figge tree:* as if hee should say, the Iewes shall be stripped of all; because the enemie shall rake all to himselfe, and shall not content himselfe with *victuals, and the rest of the booty, but shall also slay the little children.*

Vine.

Figge tree.

Cities defenced. Now in regard the Iewes had Cities well defenced, they malepertly insulted ouer the Prophets: the Prophet now insults ouer them, to wit, ouer their pride and vanity: *your Cities so well defenced* (saith he) *shall notwithstanding be impouerished.* Then hee adds, *wherein thou didst trust: all these* (saith he) *shall be put to the edge of the sword.* For this latter clause, *by the sword,* refers it selfe to the whole verse, and to euery particular branch of it. As if he should say, the enemie obtaining the victory by law of armes, *shall first spoyle the whole countrey;* 1 *then seaze vpon all their goods;* 2 *and lastly, shall cut the throats of their sonnes and daughters.* 3

Vers. 18. *And in those dayes also saith the Lord, I will not make an end with you:* others translate, I will not wholly consume you.

THe expositors concurre not about the sense of this verse: for the most of them thinke, that some hope is heere left for the faithful; yea all, almost leane this way: neither haue I seene any that expound it otherwise. They thinke then, that God heere moderates his former threatnings, and giues his seruants good hope, lest seeing the the Church so ruinated, they might imagine that no seed thereof should remaine. The word which the Prophet vseth I grant, is oft taken in this sense, as was said yesterday. But taking a narrower view of the whole context, I

See vers. 10.

am

am forced to incline to the contrary opinion: to wit, *that God rather aggrauates and amplifies the greatnesse of his vengeance.* And this word, *Also*; hath reference thereunto: as if he should say, *Thinke not I haue done with you, after the enemie hath preyed vpon all your goods, deprised you of your children, and brought you to extreame pouerty: thinke not I say, that you shall so be freed from all calamities. For my vengeance shall further prosecute you.* Hereafter indeed, there followes promises to allay the sartnesse of the former threatnings, least the faithfull should be put cleane out of heart. But doubtlesse, *in this place the Prophet brings in God as a Iudge, who takes vengeance in such wise of his people, as if no place were now left for compassion or mercy.* Then *also*, saith hee. For this word *Also*, augments the threatning: and hath great emphasis heere.

See vers. 17.

Namely, from chap. 29. to 33.

Then also, *in those dayes*: that is to say, *after the enemie hath bereaued the land of her fruits, of all her cattell, and of all her inhabitants; yet then will I not cease* (saith God) *to prosecute you still. I will not make an end with you then*; in regard I haue *other plagues* in store for you, when you shal thinke all is husht, and that *an end* is now come of all your miseries. Thus God is wont to deale with hypocrites: for such is their malepertnesse and obstinacy, that being smitten, they grow the more hardened in their bad courses, and fall to biting or gnawing of the bit, as the prouerbe saith. Now this stubbornnesse ariseth from this conceit; they thinke God hath left himselfe vnfurnished of iudgements, after he hath once or twise punished their offences. He denounceth then, that he hath *sundry sores* of chastisements ready, wherewith to punish their sinnes. To which purpose is that which followes in the next place.

It is a fearfull thing to fall into the hands of the liuing God: for after hee hath punished a people one way, yet hath he still variety of plagues in store. See Deut. 32. 22. 23. 24. 25.

Vers. 19. *And it shall come to passe, when you shall haue said, wherefore hath the Lord our God done all these things? Then shalt thou say, As you haue forsaken me, and haue serued the Gods of strangers*, word for word it is, of the stranger, *in your land: so shall you serue strangers*: other expo-

stors supply, Gods: but they peruert the Prophets meaning: *in a land that is not yours*; that is to say, in a land that shall be none of yours.

THat which I said before, appeares now plainly; to wit, *that the Prophet yet mitigates not that tartnesse and sharpnesse which he vsed in the former threatnings*: but handles the Iewes according to their obstinacy and rebellion, in regard he saw they were incorrigible. And the holy Ghost also gaue him to vnderstand, *that there should be such great obstinacy in them, that till they were vtterly dashed to pieces (as it were) they would not bow their necke to receiue the yoke.* He also heere *alleageth the cause*; lest they should fall to pleading with God; which hypocrites are wont to doe, as oft as God begins to correct them a little seuerely; for then they murmure against him; then they complaine of him, *and must needs know the causes (forsooth) wherefore he handles them so roughly, as if they deserued no such matter.* Because the hypocrites then, had these things in their mouthes; the Prophet here preuents them, *It shall come to passe* (saith he) *when you haue said*; He speakes *to the Iewes, in the person of God:* and by and by *returnes Gods speech to himself: When you then, shall haue said, wherefore hath the Lord our God done all these things?* Hee heere attributes that to these hypocrites, which alwayes went currant amongst them, as oft as they were summoned before Gods iudgement seat. For they are as forward in pleading their cause, as if they onely were wronged: and, as if God being summoned before them, to yeeld them an account: they were able to conuince him either of *cruelty, or of ouer great seuerity.* We see then how the Prophet deciphers out this desperate people to the life, who could neither be brought into any good order, nor yet to acknowledge their fault: but stood out against God with brasen foreheads, as in the rest of the Prophets we haue seene, but especially in the first chapter of *Malachy.* For there the Prophet often repeats this

See Isa. 48. 4. Mal. 1. 6. 7.

cry of the people, *wherein? wherein? what meanes this?* So our Prophet heere in like manner, *when they shall haue said* (saith he) *wherefore hath the Lord done all these things vnto vs?* As if they, forsooth, were guiltlesse. For men of reprobate minds, as they haue skill to *wipe their mouthes*, with the harlot, after they haue committed their abominations: so can they also set a bold face on the matter, and aske reasons of God, *why he chastiseth them.* So heere in the same sense these make no bones at all to call God, their God; albeit they had euen at this instant forsaken him; as was said yesterday. For this so grosse and graceless an impiety raigned amongst them, that they esteemed all things to bee gouerned by blind fortune, and and chance; and that God neuer punished them iustly. Albeit then, by their disloyalty they *had forsaken God*, yet the Prophet, the better to discouer their pride and rebellion, brings *themselues in, speaking heere*; as if God had been much obliged vnto them.

Prou. 30. 20.

See vers. 12.

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Thou shalt say vnto them (saith he) One while *God speaks to the people*, and another while *to the Prophet.* When they then shall begin to murmure after this manner; thou shalt answere, *because you haue forsaken me.* Now that the Prophets words might haue the greater waight, God bids him speake vnto them, as in his owne person: *because then you haue forsaken me*; as if *Ieremiah* spake not, *but God by his mouth.*

And haue serued strange gods: that is to say, strangers, *in your land.* God heere shewes in few words, what the Iewes had deserued, and contents himselfe with naming *one kind* onely. Wee shall see hereafter, and haue often seene heretofore, that they were culpable of many iniquities before God. But that the Prophet might (as it were) touch all in a word, he mentions no more heere but this *particular only*: *You shall serue tyrants* (saith he) *in a strange land*, who will oppresse you with cruelty; *in regard you haue serued their gods in your land.* God heere puts them in mind of those benefits hee had bestowed vpon them;

namely, that hauing driuen out from among them, the profane nations, hee gaue them the land of Canaan for their owne possession; which was so fruitfull and desirable, that it ought to haue been their perpetuall rest. God called this land his rest: why so? Because he there maintained the Iewes, and meant they onely should bee the lawfull inheritors thereof, to the worlds end. Hee now saith then, *this land was yours.* No doubt but in that hee thus calles his benefits bestowed vpon them to their remembrance, it was to aggrauate their vnthankfulnesse, in regard they were the iust and lawfull possessors of this land, which yet was none of their conqueſt. Hee saith, *they serued strange gods in their land*: and not onely that, *but strangers also.* The Prophets speake often thus: they call them the gods of the stranger, or of a strange nation: but the phrase of speech hath great waight in it; because it is an vnworthy thing, and much lesse excusable, *that the Iewes who had God dwelling in the middest of them, should by way of borrowing, seeke after the gods (heere and there) of profane nations*: as if they should say, Giue yee vs your gods. The Prophet then, poynts out this so detestable a crime, as with the finger, when he saith, *you haue serued the gods of strangers.*

Psal. 44. 3.

In the next place he adds, *you shall serue strangers.* As I thinke, he meanes not their gods: for (as I haue said) those that referre it to those gods, corrupt the true sense: but he speakes of *tyrants.* I haue giuen you (saith hee in *Ezechiel*) good lawes, which whosoeuer obserueth, shall liue in them: but you would not obey them. *And therfore will I now giue you lawes which shall not be good*: that is to say, *I will impose a tyrannous yoke vpon you*; and those that shall vanquish you, shall pill and spoyle you: yea, those barbarous nations, whose language you vnderstand not, shall take from you, your goods and riches, because you haue been disobedient and rebellious. It followes.

Ezech. 20. 21. 25.

Vers. 20.

Vers. 20. *Declare this in the house of Iacob, and publish it,* word for word, cause it to be heard, *in Iudah, saying:*

21. *Heare this I pray you, ye foolish people, that haue no heart: they haue eyes, but see nothing; they haue eares, but heare not,* word for word, and shall not heare.

THe Prophet heere confirmes his former doctrine, lest the Iewes should imagine he threatned and astonished them with words onely; and in the meane while should be fearlesse in regard of the effect. Hee saith then, *Declare,* Doubtlesse the Prophet alludes to the custome of those times: for they were wont to make wars knowne *by sound of trumpet, and by heralds of armes.* The enemie put not himselfe forthwith in battell aray to sacke all, but they first *manifested the warre:* that the cause might be knowne to be iust. God then affirmes heere, that hee hath *spoken aloud* vnto them by his Prophet *Ieremiah,* as if open war had been solemnly proclaimed, and as if the enemie had been at the gates, ready armed for the fight. *Declare this* then. And what is this declaration? *Giue eare O foolish nation.* In the first place the Prophet heere reprocheth *the Iewes and Israelites* for their carelesnesse, in that they were *void of common sense.* For by the word *heart,* the Hebrewes signifie spirit, or vnderstanding, as we haue seene elsewhere. He saith then, this people is void of all vnderstanding. First, he calles them *fooles,* or sots. But in regard many are dull and blockish, who yet are not wholly destitute of reason; therefore he adds, *they were without hart.* I grant he seemes to adde this by way of correction, *that they had eares, and eyes;* but yet by way of derision he aggrauates that which I haue said; namely, *that they were no lesse senselesse, than if they had been so many trunkes of wood, or stone.* And why?

You haue eyes, and eares, but you neither see, nor heare. No question but he alludes to the *Idols,* whereunto they were addicted. For in Psalm. 115. 8. it is said, That all Vers. 28.

they who make, and truſt in them, are like vnto them. This the Prophet alleageth, after hee had ſaid before, They haue eares to heare, and heare not, eyes to ſee, and ſee not. *Ieremiah* then taxeth the Iewes cloſely heere, for becomming ſo beſotted in their ſuperſtitions, that they had made themſelues *like to dead idols*. For there is *ſome ſimilitude of a man in an idoll*, and the parts of a man are there diſtinguiſhed: yet without any ſenſe. So in like manner, ſaith he, *The Iewes haue ſome reſemblance of men, as touching their eyes, and eares, and the externall ſhapes which they haue of men: but in the meane while they are no leſſe ſenſeleſſe than if they were ſtockes or ſtones.*

Verſ. 22. *Will ye not feare me, ſaith the Lord? and will ye not tremble before my face? who haue laid the ſand for the bounds of the ſea: a ſtatute of an age*, that is, by a perpetuall decree, *and it ſhall not paſſe it*: ſome referre this to the bounds, ſome to the ſtatute or decree, *and his waues ſhall moue, but ſhall haue no power, and ſhall make a tumult*, or ſhall roare, *and they ſhall not paſſe ouer.*

See verſ. 20.

HEre God ſhewes the reaſon why he called this people fooliſh, and without heart. For it was a ſtrange ſenſeleſneſſe in them, *that they feared not Gods preſence*, ſeeing the very *dumbe and inſenſible elements, ſubiect themſelues vnder his command.* And aboue all, hee propoſeth the example *of the ſea*: for no creature is ſo hidious and terrible as the ſea, when it is toſſed with tempeſts and waues. Why ſo? The whole world ſeemes to be turned topſie turuey, when her waues ariſe with ſo great violence: who is it that heares or ſees the ſame, that trembles not euery ioynt of him: and yet the ſea it ſelfe, which terrifies the moſt reſolute man on earth; *obeyes God quietly.* For let her flouds be neuer ſo furious, yet doe they grow calme and ſtill, and keepe within compaſſe. But if you would know the manner how; truly it is a miracle; and therefore who can giue a reaſon of it? For the ſea wee

Though the ſea be neuer ſo terrible, yet it obeyes God quietly.

know

know (as other elements are) is round: as the earth is round, so is the element of water; and so is the fier and aire in like manner. Sith the forme of this element then is round, let vs see whether it be lower than the earth, or aboue it: but her lightnesse shewes, that she is aboue the earth. Whence is it then, that the sea doth not forthwith ouerwhelme the whole earth? For she is liquid, and cannot stay in a place, vnlesse she be restrained by some secret power & mouing of God. It followes then, that the sea is shut vp within her place, because it hath so pleased God: as *Moses* also shewes in Genes. 1. 9. *Let the dry earth appeare*, saith God. For he there shewes that the earth was couered with waters, so as not a fingers bredth thereof appeared, till God had gathered them into their place. Now *this voice of God*, albeit *we heare it not* with our eares, and that it sounds not in the aire; *yet doth the sea vnderstand it well enough*; because she is contained within her bounds. *For the sea should alwayes be calme*, yet should this worke of God at all times be admirable, in regard men haue *some part of the earth dry*, wherein they may inhabite. But when the tempest riseth, as I haue said, and that it seemes heauen and earth would goe together: which of vs trembles not at the viewing of such a spectacle. Then Gods power and out-stretched arme appeares more manifestly, which thus composeth and quiets the boysterous sea. Wee now see the scope of the Prophets words. He shewes that the Iewes are become *monsters*, and *vnworthy to be reckoned among men*; no, not among the brute beasts. *For there is more vnderstanding in the sea, tossed with furious tempests; than in men, who seemed to be endowed with sense and reason.* This is the drift and scope of this comparison.

The cause why the sea ouerwhelmes not the whole world. See Iob 38. 11.

But because this complaint was very bitter, the Prophet hath vsed *a vehement interrogation*: *Will ye not feare me?* As if God should say, What meanes this? Is it possible that I should not be feared, nor reuerenced of you? The sea obeyes me, and by my secret command her furie is staid; because I

haue once ordained shee should keepe within her limits: and albeit she be violently tossed vp and downe with her waues and tempests; yet doth she not passe beyond the bounds which I haue set her. And O yee sonnes of men that are reasonable creatures! *will not yee feare me? will not yee tremble, or feare before my face?*

He adds, *that hee hath placed the sand for a bound to the sea.* Now this expresseth much more, than if he had said, I haue ordained limits for the sea. For hee speakes of the *sand which is moueable*, and with a little blast is caried this way and that way. The *sand* also is easie to be pierced into? Were there *hard rockes placed vpon all the sea bankes*, the miracle would not be halfe so admirable. If God then should beate backe the swellings of the sea with such things as were *of a solide substance*; this worke might peraduenture be ascribed to nature. *But what solidnesse is in the sand?* Let me powre but a little water vpon it, incontinently it pierceth into it. Whence comes it then, that the boysterous sea, with her roaring waues, *plowes not vp* the sand, which of its owne nature is so flexible? Wee see then, that this word *sand* is not superfluous. There is almost the like place to this, in the booke of *Iob*, chap. 38. 11. where God speaking of his inuisible power, among other things, saith, And let the sea come hitherto: let her proud waues passe no further. For it is most certaine, that the least tempest ariseth not, but by Gods will. Why so? Because he can alwayes hold the sea at one rate. But hee doth it not: nay rather, as if he laid the raines in her neck, he saith, *Goe: but yet stay heere.* Now when it seemes these great waues mounted aloft as high as the mountaines, threaten both men & beasts, as if the whole earth should therewithall bee ouerwhelmed: then doe these violent waues suddenly cease, and are calmed.

Obiect. He adds, *by a perpetuall ordinance.* I grant the sea sometimes ouerflowes. For wee see *many Cities sunke* by deluges and inundations: but this notwithstanding is true,

Answ. that it is *a perpetuall ordinance*, or decree: namely, that

God keepes the sea within her limits. For as oft as the sea inuades any part of the habitable world; then may we assuredly collect thence, that *she wanted her bridle*; whereof *Ieremiah* here, and *Iob* in chap. 38. speakes. We gather then, that *no let or impediment hinders* the sea from ouerflowing the *whole earth*, but *onely her obedience to Gods decree*: yea and this *perpetuity* also, wherof the Prophet speakes, remaines stedfast, in regard of the generall. For albeit tempests arise euery yeere, this fury notwithstanding ceaseth; end yet no otherwise than by Gods speciall command. This is true then, that *bounds* are set for the sea, *ouer which her waues cannot glide.*

The sea would ouerflow all, were it not kept in by Gods perpetuall command.

And therefore he saith, *her waues shall moone, and shall not prevaile*: and then, *they shall sound*, or make a noyse, *and shall not passe ouer*. We haue now the summe of this verse: namely, God complaines *that the Iewes were growne so furious, and so sottish, that their obedience came farre short euen of the Seas obedience; albeit she be tossed with waues and tempests.* He therefore brings forth the Iewes heere vpon the stage, *as monsters in nature*, in regard nothing is more contrary thereunto, than to see more vnderstanding in the senseless sea, and *that when it is most vnquiet*, than in man, who is created according to Gods image, who also is endowed with some sense and reason. He afterwards adds:

Vers. 23. *And this people hath a peruerse and rebellious heart: they are departed and gone.*

HEre the sentence is compleat, in regard it yet depends vpon the former interrogation. But now God shewes more cleerly why hee mentioned this matter touching the sea. *And this people*, saith he, or, *but this people, hath a peruerse heart*: for the word signifies, peruerse. Others translate, declining, which doth not fully expresse the sense. We may also see in many places, that the word which the Prophet vseth, imports somewhat

more than declining. Yea and this translation agrees better; to wit, that this people hath *a peruerse heart*: and then *rebellious*: or *which could not be tamed*. No doubt but he *compares, or opposeth the fiercenesse and rebellion of the people, to the obedience of the sea: and thus in plaine tearmes he teacheth, that there is greater furie and stupidity in this nation of the Iewes, than in the tempestuous sea.*

By the effect also he prooues, that the peoples heart is peruerse. Why so? *Because they were declined, and gone.* Had he said in a word, they had *declined*; it had not been a full proofe: but by the word *gone*, he vnderstands their obstinacy. As if he had said, As desperate diseases cannot be cured by any remedies; no more can you, *because you persist in your rebellion. They are departed* then, *and gone*: that is, *I could not reclaime them.* For God had often tryed, by the labours of his seruants, to see if hee could bring them backe into the right way: but so much the more they discouered their incorrigible obstinacy, and thereby also shewed, that there was no place left for repentance. It followes.

Vers. 24. *And said not in their heart, Let vs now feare the Lord our God, who giues raine, and the water of the morning, and of the euening*, of these words we haue spoken in another place, *in the time thereof*, or in his season, *hee reserueth vs the perpetuall weekes of the harueſt*: that is to say, for the harueſt.

See Deut. 28. 12.

HEre the Prophet in other words shewes, that the Iewes are conuinced of obstinate rebellion. Hee saith, *it came not in their minds once to say* in themselues, *let vs now feare God.* We see then, that all these things tend to one and the same end, namely, that the Iewes were no lesse senseleſſe, than the insensible elements. Nay, that there was more insensibleneſſe & rebellion in their harts, than in all the creatures of the whole world besides. *To say in the heart*, is as much with the Hebrews, as to think,

See chap. 2. 6.

or

or consider in ones selfe. The Latines say, it came not in their mind, that is to say, they were so far void of common reason and vnderstanding, yt at least this would not fall into their mind, nor once conceiue this thought, *Let vs now feare God.* Heere then he takes from them all pretext of ignorance, lest they should alleage, It is true, wee haue not serued God; but it was our errour, or vnaduisednesse that brought vs to it. Nay, saith he, you had your eyes, and your eares too, and the rest of your senses? God gaue you showers; not so much as one yeere passed ouer your heads, in which the earth brought not forth her encrease: and as oft as you put one bit of bread into your mouthes, doth not Gods liberality therein manifest it selfe vnto you? *yet haue you not once thought in your selues, this God, surely ought to be worshipped and serued.* We see then, how he heere takes from them all excuses, in respect of their ingratitude, when he saith, *they obserued not Gods benefits*, though they gazed vpon them daily with their eyes, though they touched them with their hands, and had a sensible feeling thereof in all the parts of their bodies. But of this matter we purpose to say more to morrow.

The Prayer.

Almighty God and heauenly father, seeing thou daily allurest vs so sweetly, and louingly to come vnto thee, and that thy word to this end sounds continually in our eares; be so good vnto vs, that the peruersity of our flesh may not cause vs to stop our eares, but make vs attentiue hearers of the doctrine of saluation: moreouer, grant we may be so docible and obedient, that thou maist bow and bend vs as thou wouldest haue vs, and lead vs in the path wherein thou wouldest wee should walke; till at length we may come to that blessed rest, which is prepared for vs in heauen, through Iesus Christ our onely Lord and Sauiour. Amen.

THE

THE TWO AND TWENTIETH LECTVRE, WHICH IS THE FIFTH vpon the fifth Chapter.

YEsterday wee set before you the brutish careleinesse of such as are so little affected with Gods benefits, that they are not stirred vp thereby to honour and serue him. I grant the Prophet *spake of such benefits as God bestowes equally, as well vpon the bad, as vpon the good:* to wit, he giues them showers, *the spring time, and harvest*; and so disposeth of all the parts and seasons of the yeere, that at the length the fruits of the earth ripen. For by *the weekes ordained*, or established, hee simply meanes, that God in such wise orders euery part of the yeere, *that whatsoeuer men sowe, ripens at last*. And the word, *reserues*; tends also to the same purpose: for it is all one as if he had said, The seasons so change euery yeere, that yet one continuall course and order is still obserued, and they follow (as you see) one in the necke of another, Now wee haue the Prophets meaning: for hee shewes, that the Iewes had too long been besotted, and brutishly minded; in that they considered not, no not in their ordinary and daily food, of Gods bounty and liberality towards them, which yet ought to haue been as so many goads in their sides, to haue pricked them forward to his feare and seruice. Saint *Paul* also (in his time) preaching to profane persons, Act. 14. 17. sets this consideration before their eyes, *God* (saith he) *neuer left himselfe without witnesse, in that he gaue you raine and fruitfull seasons*: that is, hee so disposed of the seasons, that one might easily behold therein, as in a glasse, his fatherly loue towards mankind. But the Prophet meant heere to taxe the Iewes of *ingratitude*,

titude, in regard they considered not how liberally God had alwayes dealt with them, and that not after an ordinary manner. For he had not onely drawne them to him, by bestowing common benefits vpon them; but had also obliged them to him, by rare and vnaccustomed mercies. Seeing then he had bestowed extraordinary fauours vpon them, so much the more odious was their vnthankfulnes, in regard they considered not in themselues, that all the benefits they had receiued at his hands, were as so many spurs in their sides, or allurements to bind them vnto him. This is the Prophets meaning then, when he saith, *They said not, Let vs now feare the Lord, which giues vs raine*: that is, the raine of the spring, and the raine before harnest; and that in due time time and season. For therein we see how the prouidence of God shineth: namely, whilest the husband-man sowes, the raine flowes; which ministreth moisture and iuyce vnto the earth: moreouer, before the fruits be ripened, how God again breathes fatnesse into them, by this raine of the euening. And that which followes, tends to the same end; who giues raines in *the weekes ordained*: or, word for word, of ordinances. But he adds, *that at length the harnest may approch.*

Vers. 25. *Your iniquities haue turned away these things from you, and your wickednesses haue hindred the good from you.*

BEcause hypocrites (as was formerly said) are wont to make their replies euer and anon against God, and to obiect this, or that. The Prophet heere preuents all their allegations, in saying that Gods liberality was hindred, and withdrawne from them, onely by their owne proper fault. For they might haue replied, Thou talkest heere to vs in very high tearmes, of Gods fatherly bounty and liberality, in that he giues vs the fruits of the earth; *but we feele how by the excessiue heat of the Sunne, our fruits are one while parched and burned vp; another while vnsea-* *Obiect.*

sonable

sonable raines, rot the graine in the earth: in a word, we see no certainty at all, but things goe confusedly forward amongst vs. To this obiection hee answereth, and saith, I grant it; *But know, it comes to passe by reason of your wickednesse and pernersity, that God tempers not euery part of the yeere in such wise, as with your eyes you may behold his continuall liberality. Your iniquities* (saith he) *haue depriued you of these things, and your wickednesses haue hindred good things from you.* This sentence then is very remarkable: for Gods fatherly goodnesse shines not alwaies alike, in respect of these outward things, but many mists comes euer and anon ouerthwart our eyes. Thence it comes, that profane persons thinke the barrennesse of this yeere, and the fruitfulnesse of that; falles out by chance. For in this life we see nothing so constantly to goe on in a streight line, as if the goodnesse of God so manifested it selfe in all things, that there should not now and then happen many obstacles and hinderances in the way. But which of vs considers, whence this trouble and confusion proceeds? Doubtlesse it is, because our selues haue shut vp the way against God, that his bounty should not continually reach vnto vs: we trouble heauen and earth then by our sins. For if wee kept our selues within the bounds of obedience to our God, certainly all the elements would bee continually for vs: and thus wee should perceiue an Angelicall harmony in all the parts of the world. But in regard we by our iniquities raise vp tumults euery day against God; yea euery day proclaime open warre against him, and by our pride, contumacy, and obstinacy prouoke him: all things, as well in the heauens, as in the earth, *must needs be out of square*. Hence it comes, that the skie is darkened ouer vs, and that continuall raines marre the fruits of the earth, and that wee see no right order in any part of the world. This so confused a distemperature then, which we discerne in all the elements, must be imputed *to our sinnes*; for that is the Prophets meaning.

Answ. *Our sinnes are the cause why Gods bounty is restrained from vs.*

Note.

Now this reprehension, no doubt, was then directed

to

to the Iewes; but wee may gather a generall doctrine from it. These two poynts then stand firme: first, that God leaues not himselfe without witnesse; in regard he giues raine, and faire weather: hee makes the earth fruitfull, to the end it may minister food for our vse. Secondly, that the aire, the firmament, and the earth, are often distempered, many things falling out vnseasonably; as if God were careless of vs. Because when wee by our sins rise vp against him; we confound and ouerturne the whole order of nature. These two thing then, must be ioyned together. *For in the ordinary course of nature, we may behold an inestimabe goodnesse of God towards mankind: but in the mutations which fall out, we must forthwith consider of the cause; namely, that we will not permit God to gouerne the world after a certaine and equall rate; but wee disturbe his prouidence, as much as lies in vs.* Now we see then, that the Prophet hath very aptly added this sentence to the former, *your iniquities haue hindred Gods blessings and benefits from you.* Then it followes.

Two points.
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See vers. 24. Vers. 26.

We will not suffer the Lord to keepe one certaine rate, concerning the seasons of the yeere.

Vers. 26. *For wicked persons are found among my people, they looke*, that is to say, they craftily espy, *where they may spread their nets, and prepare a pit to take men therein.*

HE now confirmes his last speech, namely, that the Iewes by their owne fault, depriued themselues of Gods fatherly fauour. Otherwise, they would alwayes haue had their replies ready: for as hypocrites are factious and lofty, so will they not endure to be easily brought vnder. The Prophet then confirmes that which hee said, to wit, *that there were wicked persons found among the people of God*: as if he should say, we need not now seeke out wicked ones among the profane heathen: for iniquity so raignes euen amongst vs *the elect people* of God, that there is nothing sound nor sincere amongst vs.

When he saith, *they were found* I expound it, that they were taken with the manner, and conuicted. For his meaning,

meaning is, that their wickednesses were not committed so closely and obscurely, that they could shift off the matter by their euasions: *for they were found*, saith he, as theeues that are taken breaking into mens houses. The Prophet affirmes then, that there was no need here, of any long dispute, or trauersing the matter; as if the Iewes had been some way excusable: *for they were tak-n with the deed doing*. This then was much more odious, then if the poore blind Heathen had been found guilty of these things. For God had adopted the Iewes vpon condition, that all holinesse and integrity of life should raigne amongst them. Seeing then on the contrary, they were not onely sinners, but wholly wrapt in sinne, and full fraught with impieties: this (as I haue said) was much more detestable. And thus he hath stripped them of all occasion of cauelling.

See chap. 2.26.

In the next place he presseth them yet neerer; namely, *that euery one looked*. For the word in the Prophets language signifies so much. *He shall looke*. I grant hee changeth the number, but the sense is not therefore obscure. Now the word, *to looke*, heere, signifies as much as to lay ambushes. *He shall looke* then, that is to say, euery one of them watched and espied how, and which way they might lay traps, as fowlers doe.

Afterwards he saith, *they were furnished with nets*, to draw men into ruine, after they had snared them. Heere *one kind is put for the generall*. For the Prophet meant to to shew, that at that time, there was neither faith nor vprightnesse to be found among this people, in regard euerone oppressed the simple, by wicked subtilties, and cunning practices. Being growne thus perfidious then, and in that they dealt so trecherously one with another; he iustly compares them *to fowlers*, who catch the poore birds in their nets, or gins. Which hee expoundeth yet more cleerly in the words following.

Vers. 27.

Vers. 27. *As a cage is full of birds; so are their houses full of deceit: and thereby they are encreased and growne rich.*

Ieremiah prosecutes the same doctrine, which formerly he began to handle. For hee vsed a similitude taken from *fowlers*, as we said erewhile. Now in this verse, *hee applies this similitude* to the Iewes: to wit, *that their houses were as full of fraud, as a cage* (others translate, a panyer, or basket) *is of birds*. For when fowlers go to their game, they carry with them either *bags*, *cages*, or *baskets*. Thus *Ieremiah* saith then, that they got in their booty in such wise on all sides, that their houses were full of fraud. Now by the word *deceit*, in this place, hee meanes the spoyles which they obtained by cunning practises. Indeed, at the first blush the speech seemes somewhat obscure: but if we take the word *fraud*, in the passiue signification, there will be no ambiguity at all. The Prophet then (to speake properly) saith not that their houses were full of craft, or fraud, *but of spoyles which they had gotten to themselues by fraud and deceit*. What meanes hee then by this word *fraud*? He meanes the *spoyles* wherewith they enriched themselues; as we shall see by his owne exposition anon. Wee haue now attained the Prophets meaning then, namely, *that proofes need not be sought out a farre off*, to manifest whether the Iewes deceiued the poore and simple, by their crafty conueyances: *for their houses* were full of such booties, that thence their peruersity might easily bee espied; in regard they had gotten riches on all sides, and by this meanes had spoyled poore men of their substance. For which cause he adds,

Heereupon they are encreased, and enriched. For it is likely they bragged much of their riches; as theeues and robbers, that care not whom they spoyle. For being encreased and growne great, they thought themselues farre excluded out of the common sort of men: as these Cour-

Courtiers taxed, who ſuddenly riſe to wealth by oppreſſion.

tiers, who hauing ſnatched their riches from this and that man by fraud, and by a tyrannous vſurpation, ſo as one will be able to diſpend ſixty thouſand by the yeere; another an hundred thouſand: then grow they to be ſo much the more proud and diſdainfull, in regard they thinke no man ought to call them to an account: for their eyes are dazled with the great ſplendor and glory of their riches. But the Prophet deriding this vaine and fond glorying, ſaith, *Behold they are become great in the world, and therefore they will be magnified:* but ſaith he; *they are encreaſed and enriched:* That is to ſay, If any now doe but ſearch their houſes, I grant he ſhall finde goodly and ſwelling titles there, by meanes whereof they beguiled poore ſimple people: but in the meane while all are but the ſpoyles, booties, and robberies of theeues. In a word, they are meere thefts. He adds,

Verſ. 28. *They are waxen fat*, for the word heere vſed comes of one that ſignifies oyle, they are annoynted with fat (ſaith he): If we will render it properly after the Latines, *they ſhine*, or are white: he alludes to fat men that are well fed, whoſe skin is faire, and ſhining, *yea they ouer-paſſe*, or, albeit they ouer-paſſe, *the words of the wicked*, that is to ſay, the iniquities of the wicked, *they iudge not the cauſe of the fatherleſſe, and proſper; and iudge not the iudgement of the poore.*

HEre the Prophet taxeth thoſe who were the higheſt in dignity aboue the reſt, who alſo carried a great ſway among them, in regard *of their wealth:* moreouer, they meant to be ſo priuiledged, that no man ſhould dare to controll them, becauſe they (ſorſooth) were the gouernours of the people. Before, hee ſpake in generall tearmes: but now he directs his ſpeech to ſuch as were moſt eminent aboue the people; to wit, to the *Kings councell, to the Prieſts, Iudges*, and to all ſuch as were in authority. He ſaith then, *they were ſwollen with fatneſſe, and*

and shined, albeit they ouerpassed, &c. We see how he confirmes that which hee touched briefly before: for they shrouded themselues in such wise vnder pretext of their riches, that none might compell them to render an account of their life; and therefore by way of yeelding them so much, he saith, I grant indeed you are shining, and glister as if you were all of gold. But whence comes this glistering? Whence comes this goodly shew wherewith you dazle the eyes of the simple? *You shine and are fat, you haue ouer-passed the words of the wicked:* that is, the *wayes, enterprises, and counsels* of the wicked. In a word; he signifies, that this nothing auailed wicked men, that with a looke, they were able to terrifie the whole world, that they were in credit and estimation, and were reuerenced in respect of their wealth: to bee short, that they were feared of all. *The Prophet yeelds them their honours, their riches, their goodly shewes, their fame, their reputation, greatnesse, dignities, and whatsoeuer else:* in the meane while, *you* (saith he) *haue ouerpassed the wayes and acts of the wicked.* For in the next place hee reprooues them, *because they iudged not iudgement.* Whence wee see that the Prophet speakes not of the Commons, or of priuate persons; but of set purpose taxeth the *Kings Counsell*, and the *Iudges* of the land. *They iudge not iudgement*, saith he, that it to say, They are *vtterly careless of equity and vprightnes:* but thefts, and wrongs, went vnpunished, and had their full swinge.

He also aggrauates their crime, and saith, *they iudge not iudgement*; or the cause *of the fatherlesse:* for many who are otherwise cruell, will yet haue compassion vpon poore orphans. And it is certaine that this young age, and those also that are left altogether succourlesse, doe much more moone and affect our minds. When *orphans* then, are left to the wide world, and none left to reuenge their cause; when they finde no relefe, *no not from the Iudges* themselues: *there, this place of theeuerie is yet more apparant.*

What pity should bee shewed to poore Orphans.

They prosper. He repeats that againe which hee said; to wit, that it is a vaine & fooliſh pretext, that they had gotten the applauſe of al, in regard of their riches, honours, & power. *They prospered*, ſaith he; what meanes he by this? *But in the meane while they iudged not the iudgement of the poore*: that is, they ſuccoured not the poore, but left them open to all the outrages that might be. Now then wee ſee how the wickednesſes of the people are ſo brought forth into the light, that the *heads* themſelues are not exempted; for God ſhewes they had vtterly forgotten their duties, and were altogether void of common humanity. It followes.

Verſ. 29. *Shall I not viſit vpon this, ſaith the Lord? And ſhall not my ſoule be auenged vpon ſuch a nation as this?*

See verſ. 9.

HE yet repeats that which we ſaw before: and ſo this verſe ſhall need no long expoſition. But this *repetition* is no way ſuperfluous. For the Iewes were ſo hardened, that they ſcorned all reprehenſions and threatnings. This is the cauſe why God heere *riſeth vp with greater vehemency of ſpeech*, and ſaith, *ſhall I not viſit vpon theſe things?* He takes this for a reſolued truth, whereof we alſo ought to be well perſwaded; namely, that God is the Iudge of all the world. Now it is the proper office of a Iudge, to puniſh malefactors; alſo to ſuccour the poore that are vnworthily oppreſſed, and to repreſſe the pride of ſuch as giue themſelues leaue to doe euill. God then vſeth *an argument heere, taken from his nature and office*: as if he ſhould ſay, *Can I that am God, ſuffer this ſo hatefull an impiety, this pride and preſumption of my people, to haue the ſwing on this manner, without executing my vengeance on them.*

The office of a Iudge.
1
2

And ſhall not my ſoule be auenged on ſuch a nation as this? Heere (as wee haue ſaid elſewhere) God attributes that to his perſon, which properly appertaines not vnto him. But it is all one as if hee had ſaid, *Among earthly Iudges,*

none

none are found so remisse, that can put vp such indignities, and outrages. For when a Iudge shall perceiue the people *scorne him*, will he (thinke you) take it well at their hands? *Shall not my soule* then *be auenged?* As if hee should say, I am not so slothfull nor careleſse, but in the end, be sure I will pay you home, for this contempt, so full of pride and ouerweening. It followes.

Vers. 30. *A thing to astonish*, or to terrifie, *and wicked*, or shamefull, *is in the land.* The verbe whence this word is deriued, signifies properly to thinke, or to consider: but it seemes God in this place, as in some others, meant to note out some monstrous thing, which cannot be comprehended within the compasse of common sense; as if hee should say, you cannot imagine it, nor comprehend it in your minds: I know this will indeed seeme strange; but as I thinke, there is good reason for it. Consequently hee adds,

31. *The Prophets propheſie lies, and the Priests beare rule by their hands*, or receiue by their hands, *and my people will haue it so*, that is, they desire it should bee so; *and what will ye doe in the end thereof?*

THe Prophet not contenting himselfe with his former reprehension, passeth yet further, in reprouing the faults and iniquities of his nation. He saith then, the estate of the Iewes *was so corrupt*, that the whole world might *be astonished* at it. *A fearfull thing* (saith he) *is fallen out*: that is, a thing past the reach of mans wit or reason, to imagine or comprehend. By these *two words* he signifies, that the impiety of the people cannot be expressed with words, or conceiued in the mind of man, because it is an horrible monster. This is the summe. Let vs now see what that detestable thing is, which the Prophet heere notes out, and so detests: *The Prophets* (saith he) *propheſied lies.* It is certain that this might well astonish any that should heare of it, that in Ierusalem (the City which God had

choſen for his dwelling place and ſanctuarie) theſe deceiuers ſhould dare to pretend the name of *Prophets*. What an horrible profanation of Gods name was this? Theſe impoſtors (forſooth) muſt haue it bruted euery where, that they were *the Prophets of God*. In many places there were Oracles; that is to ſay, illuſions of Satan: but to ſee and behold in the Sanctuarie of God (there being then but one in all the world) the miniſters of Satan, *to ſowe lies*, which ſhould bring the people to perdition, and in the meane while to colour all vnder Gods name; who (as I haue ſaid) had his dwelling and his ſeat royall in this City: was it not an horrible monſter that might aſtoniſh all the world. And albeit euen at this day it be a thing deteſtable for the Monkes, and thoſe ſinkes, to get vp into pulpits to preach, and wickedly to glory, as if they were Gods true Prophets, and faithfull teachers: yet if amongſt vs it ſhould fal out, that ſome one ſhould corrupt the pure doctrine with their errours, and infect, our people with their ſuperſtitions, he were *a double monſter*. It is not without cauſe then, that *Ieremiah* ſaith, it was a thing both fearfull, and incomprehenſible, *that the Prophets prophecied lies*.

They are double monſters, who dare teach lies, where the Goſpell is purely preached.

Now he adds, *the Prieſts take in their hands*; ſome tranſlate it thus: but the ſenſe may bee double. It is ſaid in Iudges, 14.9. that *Sampſon* tooke honey with his hands, out of the Lion; where the ſame word is is vſed. And yet becauſe ordinarily & for the moſt part, it is taken to rule; me thinks the other expoſitiõ agrees better; to wit, *that the Prieſts ruled by the hands of the falſe prophets*. Now albeit we tranſlate thus, *they tooke vpon their hands*, that is, they got in, and heaped together gifts on all ſides: this alſo will not be much vnapt. How euer it be, *the Prophet ſhewes there was a mutuall colluſion practiſed betweene the Prieſts, and the falſe prophets*, ſo as they held both together. For the falſe prophets (ſaith he) deceiued the people by their flatteries. But what did the Prieſts? For they ought to haue oppoſed againſt them: but *O, they receiued*

(ſaith

(saith he) *in their hands*: that is to say, *they winked at it; because they saw these inglings made for their aduantage: and thus the agreement was easily made vp betweene them*, and the false Prophets. We see the very same at this day in the Papacie: for whilest the Monkes, and that rabble, seeke to creepe into the peoples fauour, they thereby vphold and maintaine the whole Popedome. For which cause these curres, haue also dared to tearme themselues, the Popes chariots. For the Pope, say they, is carried vpon *foure wheeles*: these foure wheeles are the foure orders of beging Friars: and this they boast of, *when they meane to shew what power they haue to lie*. The Pope then is carried vpon these foure wheeles of beggars. We see also he hath adorned, and euery day adornes these beggars. Why so? Because they beare vp his tyranny. Such, at that time, was the condition of this people: for the *Priests* tooke the prey, and *the false Prophets* also raked to them another part, as these hungry dogs doe at this day: and yet these dogs set not vpon the people with such violence as the Pope doth: but like dogs, they licke vp his stoole. He with his horned Bishops, deuoure the best and the fattest part. This sense then, ye see agrees not ill; to wit, that they took in their hands. But as touching the summe, it will also agree very well, if we say, *that the Priests ruled by their hands*, in regard their state would not haue stood vpright, neither could they haue retained their credit and reputation among the people, without these false prophets: for they were reiected of all. Seeing then, they raigned (as it were) by their hands, there was a mutuall compact betweene them.

The Popes Chariots vpon which he is carried: to wit, the foure orders of beging Friars.

He adds, *and my people will haue it so*; because the common people might easily (as they thought) exempt themselues from all blame: for euen so it is their custome at this day, to shroud themselues vnder this defence: Alas, we are poore silly men, we were neuer at the schooles, we are none of these great Clerkes; and what would ye haue vs to doe, but follow our Prelates? Those of the meaner,

and baser sort of people then, amongst vs, would willingly auoid all blame, vnder this pretext. But the Prophet saith heere, *the people will haue it so.* It is certaine we shall alwayes find that which is written in Deut. 13. 3. to bee most true: as oft as *false Prophets arise*, it is a true tryall of the peoples constancy, whether they will loue the Lord or no, with all their hearts. As oft then as God meanes to make triall of the peoples piety; he layes the raines (as it were) in the neckes of false Prophets and deceiuers, to deceiue. For whosoeuer loues God with a sincere affection, will be held backe by his holy spirit, from following lyes and errours. *When the ignorant then are misled and reduced*, it is certaine, *they are iustly punished for their contempt, in regard they were not attentiue enough vnto his word*: and withall, because voluntarily they *loue to bee seduced by deceiuers*. For the Monkes and clergie men can say, and they haue it oft in their mouthes, *Seeing the world will be deceiued, let them in the diuels name be deceiued.* Ye see these wicked deceiuers are growne so shameless, that they glory in the diuels seruice, as being his slaues and instruments, whereby he deceiues the world. And yet is this notwithstanding a true prouerbe: *for the world is neuer deceiued, but wittingly, and willingly.* Why so? Because they that are most ignorant, shut their eyes against the cleere light, and flee from God as much as in them is, delighting to hide themselues in darkenesse, as our Lord Iesus Christ also saith, *Whosoeuer euill doth, hates the light*, Ioh. 3.20.

The rising vp of false teachers, a triall of the peoples constancie.

He that loues the Lord in truth, will not be drawne away by false teachers.

A monk sh prouerbe.

A true Prouerbe

Ioh. 3.20.

Lastly, the Prophet adds, *And what will ye do in her last?* or, in her end. Some leaue out the relatiue heere, and others refer it to the Priests and false prophets. But I assure my selfe, the Prophet notes out the City of Ierusalem heere, when he saith, *what will ye doe in her end?* For Ierusalem being founded (as we know) by God owne hand, and hauing him for her guardian and protector, shee grew altogether secure: but it was a false security: for in despising and contemning the Lord, shee grew

proud

proud and headstrong in her iniquities. *What will yee doe* then (saith he) *in her last?* As if he should say, you much deceiue your selues, in thinking this City shall stand euer: for her ruine and destruction is euen at the doores. *What will ye then doe, when the City it selfe shall goe to wracke? must not euery one of you perish together with her?*

The Prayer.

Almighty God and heauenly Father, seeing hitherto wee haue been too deafe, in hearkening to so many exhortations, as also to those threatnings whereby thou hast more sharply pricked vs forwards to repentance; grant that this our obstinacy may not alwayes remaine in vs, but that in the end wee may subiect our selues vnto thee; and that not by fits, or for a moment, but with a constant resolution, that wee may for euer giue our selues wholly to thy seruice, and that we may also so glorifie thy name, that in the end we may attaine that glory, which thou hast purchased for vs, by the blood of thine onely Sonne, Iesus Christ.
Amen.

The end of Master *Caluins* Lectures vpon the fiue first chapters of the Prophesie of *Ieremiah.*

THE

The end of Master Calvins Lecture upon the first chapter of the Epistle of Paul to Titus.

THE SVMME AND ORDER OF SVCH THINGS as are handled by the Author, in his *Lectures on the former Chapters of Ieremiah his propheſie.*

The figures in the margin, poynt to the Chapters, and verſes: the reſidue, to the page or pages, where the things themſelues are to be found.

The firſt Lecture.

THe firſt thing noted in this Lecture, is the time when Ieremiah began to execute his propheticall office: namely, in the thirteenth yere of Ioſiah his raigne, ouer the kingdome of Iudah. page 2.

In the next place is noted, how long he continued to execute his charge: to wit, vntill the Iewes were carried away captiue into Babylon; which is thought to be for the ſpace of fortie yeeres together. p. 3. See verſ. 3. of this Chapter.

Whence is alſo noted his inuincible conſtancy: firſt, if regard be had to the meſſage on which he was ſent: ſecondly, to the parties vnto whom it was ſent. ibid. for which ſee verſe 18. of this Chapter.

The ſumme of his meſſage, was to declare to the Iewes, that the time of Gods laſt vengeance was now at hand; becauſe they had too long abuſed his patience, and long forbearance of them. p. 5.

The Prophet by birth, is ſaid to be the ſonne of Hilkiah one, of the Prieſts which were in Anathoth. p. 7. Chap. 1. Verſ. 1.

And therefore that his office ſuted well to his perſon: whereas Iſaiah was called from the Court, to be a Prophet;

and

and Amos from the heard. p.8.

2 He came not before he was sent. p. 9.10.

It is probable that Amon was rather Iosiah his legall, than naturall father. ibid.

3 The note on this verse hath been observed before, in p.3.

4 His words, mentioned in vers. 1. 2. are heere said to bee to be the Lords words. p.11.

5 Hee was by Gods secret decree, created a man, that hee might be a Prophet to the nations. p.12.

6 He heere shewes how loth he was to be imployed in the office of teaching. p.13.

The second Lecture.

7 God opposeth his command, against his modest excusing of himselfe; thereby giuing him sufficient warrant to vndertake this charge, notwithstanding all his insufficiencies. p.16.

8 Arming him yet further against his immoderate feare; promising him therewith, his presence to accompany him, and his protection ouer him, p.18.

9 To which he yet adds, a visible signe, the better to confirme his faith heerein. p.19.

10 Heere is shewed, that Gods word in the mouth of his seruants, is of soueraigne authority. p.21.22.

A two fold vse of the word, viz. to root vp, and to plant; and why the words are so placed. p.23.

11 Gods word, and the effect therof, goe euer together, though to vs it doth not alwayes appeare so.

12 Which is signified by Ieremiahs vision of the rod of an Almond tree: and therefore vers. 10. and 11. must bee considered both together. p.27.

The third Lecture.

13 The nation of the Iewes compared to a seething pot. p.3.

14 The first punishment threatned to be inflicted vpon them was, that the Chaldeans should make such an inroade vpon them, as that they should pitch their tents euen before the

15 gates of Ierusalem. p.34.

16 Heere is shewed what causes moued the Lord to bring so sharpe a iudgement vpon them: first, they forsooke the true God:

God: secondly, they worshipped false Gods; euen the workes of their owne hands. p. 37.38.

Which iudgement (let them take it as they would) the Prophet must with all readinesse denounce against them: for so much is implied, when the Lord bids him, Trusse vp his loynes, &c. p. 39. 17

And lest he should slacken his duty, the Lord armeth him against the second time, against immoderate feare: adding thereto a seuere threat, if he should decist, viz. that he would surely be auenged on him. p. 40. 41.

The fourth Lecture.

Contrariwise, if in the strength of the Lord, hee went on cheerfully in doing his message; God promiseth so to fortifie him, that he should become inuincible; albeit Kings, Princes, Priests, and people, should plot together to oppose him. p. 43. 44.45.46. 18 19

The maine cause why God sent his Prophet to reclaime them (if it might be) is heere said to be that free mercy and loue, which at the first it pleased him to manifest towards them. p. 51.52. Chap. 2. Vers. 1. 2

Here are recited many fruits flowing from this mercy and loue of God towards them, the rather to aggrauate their disloyalty, and vnthankfulnesse. p. 54.55. 3

Now because their reuolt from God was causelesse, as on his part, and altogether bootlesse to them; the Lord prefixeth to this accusation, a solemne preface, commanding them to giue him audience. p. 56.57. See vers. 8. and 11. 4. 5.

The fifth Lecture.

Taxing them for not seeking to him in their extremities, who notwithstanding had done so great things for them: but carried themselues aloofe from them, as if he had neuer done ought, either for them, or for their fathers before thē. p. 59.60. 6

Now the better to set forth Gods prouident care ouer them, together with their ingratitude for the same, heere is a description of the wilderuesse, through which hee miraculously led them. p. 61.

Where he not onely preserued and fed them, for many yeres, but 7

but brought them afterwards into a land flowing with milke and honey; but like foolish people and vnwise, they turned his grace into wantonnesse. p.62.63.

8 Now their sinne of not asking after the Lord, mentioned vers.6. was not to be charged vpon the common people alone; but the Prophet shewes, that euen their leaders and teachers were deeply guilty of the same crime with them. p.64.

Not onely so, but that therewithall they reuerenced dumbe Idols, more than the liuing God; albeit by experience they found, that they honoured such gods as could giue them no-
Deut.29.26. thing. p.67.68. See vers.5.

9 For which they must make their reckoning, to be called to their answere. p.69.70.

10 Here the Lord compares them with people of forrain coun-
11 treys; shewing that those poore idolaters, kept themselues closer to the seruice of their Idols, than the Iewes did to the seruice of the true God; who yet was their glory. And thus they changed him for a thing of nothing. p.72.73. See vers.5. and 8.

The sixth Lecture.

12 Heere the Prophet, as one out of hope to benefit his nation by ought he could say, turnes him to the insensible and guiltlesse creatures, as if it had been easier for him to smite them with amazement for their disorders, than the sinners themselues, who were guilty indeed. This verse therefore must bee ioyned to the former, as the conclusion thereof. p.75.76.

13 Two euills the people are heere taxed with; the one sauouring of inconstancy; the other of folly: of inconstancy, in forsaking God, the fountaine of all their welfare: of folly, in changing him, for such helpers, as could affoord them no helpe. p.76.77.

14 It is a thing iustly to be wondred at, when a free people, by their sinnes; haue brought themselues into the state of bondmen. p.79.

15 We often cause our enemies (by reason of our sinnes) rather to resemble sauage beasts in spoyling vs, than men: when God in his iustice giues vs vp for a prey vnto their teeth. p.81.

Yea,

Yea, sinne causeth God to set, not onely our enemies vpon vs; but turnes from vs the hearts of our neereſt confederates alſo. p. 81.82. 16

If ye aske for what ſinne this iudgement befell the Iewes? It was for the ſinne of Apoſtaſie, in falling away from the Lord their God, who had done more for them than all the world beſides. p. 82.83. 17

Neuer looke therefore for comfort from friends, when God is at odds with vs. p. 85. 18

Rather than wicked rebels ſhall want a fury to vexe them, God will make their owne conſciences to be inſtead of a racke vnto them. p. 88. 19

The ſeuenth Lecture.

God cannot endure that men ſhould turne his grace into wantonneſſe. p. 93.94. 20

God had planted the Iewes as a vine of choyce, and therefore therefore expected choyce fruits from them: but inſtead of bringing forth pleaſant grapes, they yeelded him onely wild grapes. p. 96. 21

In regard wherof their guiltineſſe was growne to be of ſuch a double dye, that all the excuſes they could alleage for themſelues, were not able to waſh it off. p. 98. 22

And yet their impudency being ſuch, as for all that, to plead not guilty: the Prophet is faine (vnder two ſimilitudes) to poynt them out to the very fact: ſhewing how they committed ſinne with greedineſſe. p. 100. 23

But in the middle of their race, God at length gaue them their load, by laying afflictions vpon them. p. 102. 103. 24

The eighth Lecture.

But for all this they could not be kept in, no not by reprehenſions, nor corrections; but ſtill would be running from vnder Gods protection, to ſhroud themſelues vnder the wing of ſtrangers. p. 105. 25

Thus their reuolt is manifeſted by God himſelfe, to their ſhame; what euer they could alleage to the contrary. p. 109. 110. 26

Yea, he convicteth them out of their owne words and deeds, 27

proning

proouing that they gaue that honour to false gods, which belonged to the true God. p.111.

28 And therefore sends them ouer to seeke helpe from them in their troubles, seeing they had vnworthily reiected him: testifying that they might haue found more sufficiency of helpe in him, who was but one; than in all the multiplicity of their Idoll gods. p.114.

29 He henceforth commands them silence therefore, seeing their reuolt was too apparant. p.115.

30 Yea, albeit to words, he had added blowes, and that vpon their young men; yet all was in vaine: besides, they had cruelly put the Prophets to death, which God had sent among them to a farre better end. p.116.117.118.

See vers. 34.

The ninth Lecture.

31 God had ill deserued thus to be dealt withall by them: he therefore bids them to consider what a God hee had been to them, the rather to humble them. p.121.122.123.

32 And yet for all this, they minded him nothing so much, as girles doe their toyes and trinkets. p.123.124.

33 Now hauing abandoned God, their first and best husband, they studied how to make themselues amiable in the eyes of strangers; which cost, they might well haue spared, and their paines also, had they been content quietly to haue dwelled vnder the protection of the Almighty. p.126.

34 Heere he layeth innocent blood againe to their charge, as in vers. 30. shewing, that they killed not the Prophets primly, as theeues doe true men; but that the signes thereof were to be seene in euery place, yea vpon the hems of their garments. p.127.128.

35 And yet like audacious hypocrites, being chalenged for their villanies, they both faced it out, as if they had been the onely innocent creatures; telling the Lord, that if hee would but withdraw his terrours a little from them, they would find defences enough to answere all these accusations. p.130.

36 But they were not to imagine thus to steale away in the darke; because God would for all these things bring them to iudgement. p.134.135.

The

The ninth Lecture.

That which is layd before in vers. 18. may shew the summe of this 36. verse. p. 135. 37

That which to their thinking would procure matter of reliefe and succour vnto them, should be turned into cause of shame and confusion vnto them. 01

The Lord in these verses proues once more, whether hee could ouercome the Iewes disloyalty, with kindnesse, or no. p. 140. Chap. 3. Vers. 1.

For proofe of which disloyalty, he requires but their owne testimony: prouided, that they would therein deale plainly, and honestly. p. 144. 2

And if they refused to doe it, they needed but the very heauens ouer their heads to conuince them thereof, whilest they yeelded them no more raine to refresh the earth in the appointed seasons, than if they had been made altogether of brasse. p. 146. 3

The eleuenth Lecture.

And yet whilest the heauens might seeme to be merciless, it was not so with the Almighty: for euen in the middest of their punishments inflicted vpon them for their sinnes, he seekes to allure them to repentance. p. 148. 4

But were they allured? No, they stiffly resisted, both in word and deed. p. 150. 5

Though Iosias were a good Prince, and was exceeding carefull to reforme matters that were amisse, both in Church and Common-wealth: yet euen then, the ten Tribes gaue themselues to superstitions and Idolatries. p. 152. 6

And yet then, God sought also by his lenity, to draw these to repentance; but little to the purpose: for they were resolued to continue in their wicked courses still. p. 154. 7

God was therefore constrained, when he saw she would needs play the harlot, to giue her a bill of diuorce, and send her away. p. 155. 8

But this was so far from fearing Iudah (for whose cause he ten tribes are here brought in, vnder the similitude of an adulterous wife) that contrariwise she is said to be fearlesse. p. 156.

9 Yea contrariwise, by the lightnesse of her whoredomes, she defiled the land; that is, he even made it guilty, by her idolatry. p. 157.

10 And as in the dayes of good King Iosias, they made any shew of conversion vnto God, yea (in respect of the multitude) all was but from the teeth outward, and meerly in hypocrisie. p. 158.

11 Therefore the Prophet concludes, that if comparison should now be made, betweene Iudah, and Israel; that Israel (of the two) should prooue herselfe leſſe guilty: firſt, in regard the Iewes had euen in the Temple, their ſacrifices (whereof they gloried not a little) and therefore as they had better meanes; ſo they ſhould in the ſecond place, haue giuen good

12 example to the other. Laſtly, they ſhould haue become wiſe, by ſeeing their brethren ſo ſharply puniſhed for their Idolatry (as it were) euen before their eyes. p. 159.

The twelfth Lecture.

Now God ſeeming to haue beſtowed labour in vaine vpon Iudah; he turnes his ſpeech from them, to the poore ſcattered ten Tribes, offering them mercy, if yet they would conuert: and leſt they might obiect their owne vnworthineſſe; againſt that, God oppoſeth one argument which might ſerue in ſtead of a million, to induce them to beleeue, to wit, an argument taken euen from his owne gracious nature: Returne thou backſliding Israel. Why? For I am mercifull, ſaith he. p. 162. 163.

13 Onely they were to acknowledge their iniquity. For he that hideth his ſinne ſhall not proſper. And leſt they might ſay, they were to ſeeke how to frame their inditement againſt themſelues: God, to preuent that excuſe, frames it for them, putting the words (as it were) into their mouthes; adding in the end, the cauſe of all: to wit, they refuſed to heare thoſe wholeſome inſtructions, which God tendred them out of his word. p. 64.65.66.

14 But becauſe poore ſinners are not eaſily brought to beleeue, that God meanes as he ſpeakes, when he offers them mercy: he exhorts them the ſecond time, to returne vnto him vpon

this

their ground. viz. that sins committed should themselves as a disparall wife commit like him: yet he retained the affection of a loving husband towards them; and would bee ready to accept them againe into his favour, though but one out of a City, or two out of a Tribe should come unto him. p. 168. 169. 170. 14

And would be ready to shew a token of his especiall favour upon them; namely, in giving them Pastors after his owne heart, which should breake unto them the bread of life. p. 171. 172. 15

And thus, after God and they should be at one againe, then would he cause both the houses of Iudah and Israel, to become one also: so as all causes of warre and debates being done away, they should (like brethren) hold the hand of unity, and unite one with another. p. 173. 174. 16

Which exposition is here confirmed, with the cause thereof rendred, in regard God would correct that stubbornesse of heart, after which formerly both of them had walked. p. 175. 17

The thirteenth Lecture.

For Gods wrath being now appeased; after both houses had been thus severely chastised, he would cause them like brethren, to return out of the land of their captivity (as it were hand in hand) into the land of their nativity. p. 178. 179. 18

But what should be the meanes to effect this? God would give them the spirit of prayer, by which they should cry unto him, Abba, Father. 19

And this, not for any merits of theirs, for by their sinnes they had deserved the contrary: therefore they were to acknowledge that God did it freely, and for his owne mercy sake. And thus the Prophet once againe seekes to awaken the Iewes, by the example of the Israelites. p. 181. 20

Bringing them in lamenting, whilest the Iewes lay securely snorting in their impenitency. p. 182. 183. 21

Here God is brought in, as a father relenting towards a graceless sonne: and the Israelites repenting towards their good father. p. 184. 185. 22

23 And withall confessing their folly and errour, which they could not see before: to wit, that whereas the helpe of one God had been alwayes sufficient for them in all extremities; yet, as if he had been too weake to saue them, they thought it the safer way to trust to a multitude of Gods. p. 185.186.

24 The odiousnesse of which sinne they might well discerne, in seeing how their fathers had smarted for it; in that as a consumption, it deuoured both them and theirs. p.186.

25 Themselues also being heires of their fathers iniquities, tasted in like manner with them of the same punishments, from their youth; in regard both of them, had done wickedly against God, euen from their youth. p.187.188.

The fourteenth Lecture.

Chap.4.Vers.1. Israel hath oft been summoned to conuert: but lest shee should please her selfe in a fained, or halfe conuersion; the Lord wisheth her in this place, to fall to it in good earnest. p.190.191.

2 The truith of which their conuersion he wisheth them to testifie, by vsing the name of God reuerently and vprightly, in all the parts of his worship and seruice. p.192.193.

Shewing, that if they had taken this course, they might euery way haue been mirrours of Gods mercies: but the contrary, was the cause of Gods curses vpon themselues; which also kept off the Heathens from comming in, to partake with them in the worship of the true God; who had promised, that in Abrahams seed, all the nations of the earth should be blessed. p.194.195.

3 Now because their sinnes had of old taken deepe rooting within them, he vseth a similitude, vnder which he tels them, it is vnpossible they should euer become fruitfull, vnlesse they suffered the word of God (as a plough) to rend vp the fallow ground of their hearts; that so these vices (which for the hurt they did, he compares to thornes) might be rooted vp. p.196.197.

4 And that they might the rather be brought vnto it, he puts the Iewes in mind of the Sacrament of Circumcision, wherein they gloried so much; wishing them not to rest in the bare

bare and outward ceremony only, but to shew foorth the effect thereof; first in their inward man, and then in their whole conuersation. p. 198.

And this he bids them doe without delay: for if they deferred their repentance, it would bee the next way to hasten the wrath of God to breake forth vpon them as fier; which being once inflamed, will not easily be quenched. p. 200.

For if it be once kindled, all defences wherein they trusted, 5.6.
should turne into smoke and vanity. p. 201.

The fifteenth Lecture,

That he might yet strike the greater terrour into them, he 7
tels them, not that their enemie shall come; but that he is come forth, as a Lion hungry after his prey, to deuour them. p. 203.

And therefore it is high time for them now, vnlesse they 8
meane indeed to perish, to humble themselues: for otherwise, they haue not man, but God also an enemy against them. p. 204. 205.

Nowleast the Prophet might be thought to affright them 9
with bug-beares, he tels them that God his iudgements shall touch them to the quicke; when King, Princes, and Prophets, (who might thinke to be priuiledged) should stand astonished at it. p. 206. 207.

So as by the effects they should discerne, whether it had 10
been better for them to haue beleeued Gods true Prophets, who alwayes told them the truth, than to trust in the flatteries of the false prophets; which in the end, deceiue them that trust therein. p. 208. 209.

They must not thinke therefore that hee will correct them 11.12
now, as in times past, for their amendment; but rather to looke by some violent iudgements, to be swept from off the face of the earth. p. 210. 211.

Neither must they thinke God will be long in effecting it; 13
though it may be, they must feele it, before they will beleeue it. p. 112. 113.

Yet lest they might thinke their case vtterly desperate, God 14
offers

offers them conditions of peace, vpon condition of their vnfained repentance. p.212.213.

The Sixteenth Lecture.

15 But for as much as he saw little hope of their amendment, he goes on with threatning their ruine, euen as if it had been already at their doores, to seaze vpon them p.217.218.

16 And therefore seeing them for all this, still hardened in their sinnes, the Prophet turnes his speech from them, as hauing lost all his labour, and bids the Gentiles take notice of the destruction which was to come vpon Ierusalem, in as much as her inhabitants for their stupidity and stubbernesse, were vnworthy to heare any more thereof. p. 219.

Telling them, that howsoeuer the enemy seemed farre off, yet their cry might (after a sort) be heard into the Cities of Iudah. p. 120.

17 Who shall so incompasse them round about; that there will be no escaping for them: and lest they might thinke the Lord too seuere in dealing thus with them, he renders the reason therof in the latter member of the verse. p. 221.

18 And therefore discharging himselfe of dealing iniuriously with them, hee layes the fault wholly vpon their owne desarts: as if he should say, your sinnes haue been so hainous against me, that I could not vse you otherwise: and if your chastisement proue bitter, and piercing; you may thanke your selues. p. 222.

19 But the Prophet seeing them senseless, notwithstanding the misery and danger, which should befall them, shewes, that himselfe had such a liuely apprehension thereof within his owne bowels, that he was to seeke (as it were) of fit words to expresse it withall. p. 223. 224. 225.

20 For the decree was gone forth; and henceforth they must know, that miseries shall befall them one in the necke of another: in so much that the end of one, shall be but the beginning of another, euen to their vtter vastation, and that ere they be aware. p. 226. 227.

21 But being dull of hearing; the Prophet giues them to vnderstand, that after the banner of the enemie shall be displayed.

played, and the trumpet begin to sound an alarme to the battell, they must expect no truce. p.228.

And if they would know for what cause all these evils should befall them; they need but looke into themselues, and there they might see, it was no more than they had deserued. p.229.230. 22

The seuenteenth Lecture.

Here vnder foure visions (containing sundry figures) the Prophet (because they should not deceiue themselues) signifies, that howsoeuer they might thinke they were secure, notwithstanding all his threatnings, in regard of their present prosperous condition; yet the time was come, wherein the Lord (as it were with another deluge, would sweepe them all from off the land. p.232.233.234.235.236. 23 24 25 26

And lest he should not be beleeued, he brings in the Lord himselfe setting his seale (as it were) to that he had deliuered. p.237.238. 27 28

Now after sinners come once to be pursued of God in his anger, they can find no place they thinke, in which they can be secure enough. p.243. 29

No not when they haue added thereto all the policies, which the art or wit of man can deuise. p.245. 30

For when all is done, anguish will ouertake them, ere they be aware. p.148. 31

The eighteenth Lecture.

That God might be iust when he speakes, and pure when he iudgeth: hee offers himselfe to be tried (as it were) by a verdict, whether he hath kept an euen course, in inflicting chastisements vpon the Iewes. p.250.251. Chap. 5. Vers. 1.

But because none was able to controll his iudgements, he shewes he inflicted no more vpon them, then they deserued; in regard that vnder pretence of religion, they tooke his name in vaine. p.252.154. 2

For they could not so disguise themselues with their hypocrisie all shewes, but God was able to discerne them well enough. p.256. 3

Adding thereto a complaint, that they would not take know-

knowledge of the hand that smote them, but were so hardened in their sinne, that no corrections could amend them. p. 258. 259. 260.

The nineteenth Lecture.

4 5 Here the Prophet taking (as it were) a survey of his nation, finds all sorts, high and low, alike infected, with affected and grosse ignorance of God, and of obstinate rebellion against him. p. 263. 264. 265.

6 God had no reason to spare them then, any longer; but seeing they had multiplied their sinnes against him; he would send in multitudes of enemies, of Lion-like dispositions, to make hauocke of them. p. 266. 267.

7 8 God here taxeth the Iewes of three crimes: the two first, respects the breach of the first, & third commandement of the first Table, p. 268. 269. 270. The latter, the breach of the seuenth, and that after a most grosse & brutish maner. p. 272.

9 And therfore as in vers. 7. so here, he falles to debate the case with them; making themselues iudges of the equity of his dealing towards them: whether in regard of the sharpnesse of his reprehensions, or of his iudgements threatened to ensue; if the first tooke no place. p. 273. 274.

The twentieth Lecture.

10 But as if he had spoken to deafe eares, he turnes his speech from them, to the Caldeans: and the better to awaken them out of their drowsinesse, he appoints the Chaldeans to scale the wals of Ierusalem; and neuer to leaue battering of them, till the City were laid wast. p. 275. 276.

11 The reason is added: both the houses of Iudah and Israel, are charged by Gods owne testimony, to haue plaid the reuolters against him. p. 278.

12 For in plaine tearmes they affirmed, that though the Lord by Ieremiah, had threatened them thus sharply, yet they should speed well enough for all that. p. 279. 280.

13 And therefore concluded, that if any went to the walles, it must be Ieremiah himselfe; as for his words against them, they should passe away with the wind, without taking any effect at all. p. 281. 282.

Which intolerable pride of theirs, in insulting ouer the word of the Lord, in the mouth of his Prophet, he could no longer endure: and therfore as one taking his part against them, denounceth, that the words of his mouth, which they esteemed as wind, should become a fier to consume them, euen as the stubble. p. 283. 284. 285. 14

Which metaphor of fier and stubble, is here in plain termes explained. p. 286. 287 15

The one and twentieth Lecture.

Heere vnder another metaphor he shewes how the enemy shall deuoure all. p. 288. 289. 16

The which he lays forth in the particulars: shewing how it shall reach to their defenced Cities, and so to the persons euen of their sonnes and daughters; as also to their sustenance, and substance. p. 289. 17

And yet the Lord tels them, they must expect no truce; because his wrath was not turned away from them, but should be stretched forth still. p. 290, 291. 18

And if they would needs haue him to giue them an account of handling them thus seuerely; he shapes them a ready answere to their demand. p. 292, 293, 294. 19

But lest hee might bee thought to affright them with words onely; he shewes his words shall be no lesse effectuall, than if the enemy had already sounded an alarme to the battell. p. 295. 20

Which they could not be ignorant of, but that they were become meerly senselesse, and hartlesse. p. 295. 296. 21

Now lest they should make their replies; God conuinceth them by a comparison taken from the boysterous Sea, which is ready to be calmed at his onely becke and command: but such was their rebellion, that nothing would daunt them. p. 297. 298. 22

Heere the doctrine of the similitude formerly mentioned, is applied home to the Iewes. p. 299. 300. 23

And though God came nearer to them by his benefits, in giuing them the former and the latter raine: yet all was one; they remained insensible and vngratefull still; they could not 24

conceiue

...wardnesse so much as through fearing to displease them. pag. 301.302.

25

The two and twentieth Lecture.

Therefore if they found God to restraine his benefits from such, as restrained their thankes from him: they were not to

26 *thinke it strange. They might thanke themselues for it. p.304. 305.*

For their wickednesses were growne so apparant, that the

27 *very fact it selfe committed them thereof; to their very faces. p.305.306.*

Shewing, that Fowlers cages are not commonly more replenished with birds, then their houses were filled with the

28 *bootie they had filched from the poore, by their craft and subtilties. p.307.*

Neither was this to be found among the common sort: but among the Iudges and Magistrates: who because they were

29 *growne great by their oppressions, neglected the cause of the poore and fatherlesse his indgement. p.309.*

To which purpose he takes vp his speech againe, vsed vers.9 which shewes, that the Iewes were growne to be so hardened in

30 *sinne, that God must at once auenge himselfe vpon them, vnlesse he should cease to be the iust Iudge of the world. p.310.*

31 *As before he had taxed them in the Magistracy: so now by way of admiration at so horrible an impiety, he taxeth them in the Ministery, both Priests and Prophets; in that by their flatteries and lies, they made the people their prey: who yet were willing enough (for their parts) to be so abused by them. p.311.312.313.*

Concluding the whole with this; that seeing there was such disorder among all sorts, both high and low; therefore they must in the end, looke for a miserable downefall. p.314. 315.

FINIS.